THE LIMITS TO STABILITY: THE ~~AFTERMATH~~ ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT ON VIETNAM, JANUARY 1973 - AUGUST 1974.

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ABSTRACT

THE LIMITS TO STABILITY : THE ~~AFTERMATH~~ ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT ON VIETNAM, JANUARY 1973 - AUGUST 1974.

The Paris Agreement of 27 January 1973 was intended, at least by some of its authors, to end the war and to bring peace to Vietnam and Indochina. Studies on the Agreement have generally focused on the American retreat from Vietnam and the military and political consequences leading to the fall of Saigon in April 1975.

This study will seek to explore a number of questions which remain controversial. It addresses itself to considering whether under the circumstances prevailing between 1973 and 1974 the Paris Agreement could have worked. In the light of these circumstances it argues that the Agreement sought to establish a framework for future stability and economic development through multilateral aid and rehabilitation aimed at the eventual survival of South Vietnam.

The main thrust of the study is the interraction between the US and the Asian protagonists, considered on their own terms. Special prominence is given to the role of Japan, who endeavour -ed to contribute, under the Agreement's auspices, the centre of gravity for the economic dimension. From the Indochina

perspective the protagonists include the communist power centres of North Vietnam and Cambodia and the government of South Vietnam. The consequences of the accord for East Asia are also examined where it complemented new realities emerging there in the form of the Japan-China dialogue, the assumptions of US strategy and the diplomacy surrounding them.

The attempt is made to identify through the day-to-day course of events the different stages in the evolution of the intended design. Especially close attention will be paid to certain periods to identify major turning points when the conjunction of events had a crucial bearing on the final outcome. Equal consideration is given to explain how and why the Paris Agreement lost all credibility and was no longer a possible framework for stability in Vietnam and Indochina.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

US, JAPAN & SOUTH VIETNAM:

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AID	Agency for International Development
ARVN	Army of the Republic of Vietnam
ASPAC	Asian and Pacific Council
DMZ	The Demilitarised Zone
ECAFE	Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank)
ICCS	International Commission for Control and Supervision
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JCP	Japanese Communist Party
JEC	Joint Economic Commission
JGS	Joint General Staff
JMC	Joint Military Commission
JSP	Japanese Socialist Party
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
MITI	Ministry of International Trade and Industry
NCNRC	National Council for National Reconciliation and Concord
NEC	National Energy Commission (South Vietnam)
NPC	National Petroleum Commission (South Vietnam)
OCCA	Overseas Construction Cooperation Association (Japan)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

OPEC	Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PDC	Petroleum Development Corporation (Japan)
RVN	Republic of Vietnam
UN	United Nations
WSAG	Washington Special Actions Group

CHINA, CAMBODIA, NORTH VIETNAM & THE SOVIET UNION:

CCP	Chinese Communist Party
COMECON	Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA)
COSVN	Central Office, South Vietnam
CPK	Communist Party of Kampuchea
CPNLAF	Cambodian People's National Liberation Armed Forces
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
DRV	Democratic Republic of Vietnam
FUNK	National United Front of Kampuchea
GRUNK	Royal Government of National Union of Kampuchea
NLF	National Liberation Front (South Vietnam)
PAVN	Vietnam People's Army (North Vietnam)
PRC	People's Republic of China
PRG	Provisional Revolutionary Government (South Vietnam)
TASS	Telegrafinoye Agentsvo Sovietskoyo Soyuza (Soviet Telegraph Agency)
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VWP	Vietnam Workers' Party

A NOTE ON VIETNAMESE, CHINESE & JAPANESE NAMES

Vietnamese names are presented in the 'standard' Romanised form of 'quoc-ngu' with surname first: for example, 'Le Duc Tho', Le being the surname although the personal name rather than the surname would be used; hence 'Mr. Tho'.

Chinese names are also presented in the 'standard' form of Romanisation, 'hanyu pinyin' officially adopted by the Western media since 1979 with surname first followed by personal name: for example, 'Zhou Enlai' would be referred to as 'Premier Zhou'.

Japanese names are given in the Romanised form, as in 'romanji' and used as they are in Japan, with surname first followed by personal name, hence 'Nakasone Yasuhiro' referred to as 'Mr. Nakasone'.

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The interpretations and the errors in this work are my own. The thesis is dedicated to my Father.

Yvonne Tan

Penang, Malaysia.

April 1991.

PART I

INTRODUCTION

The Paris Agreement of January 1973 was intended, by at least some of its authors, to end the war and to restore peace in Vietnam. The aftermath of the Agreement, particularly the military and political consequences leading to the collapse of South Vietnam in April 1975 have generated much debate. The standard interpretation of the Agreement argues that it inaugurated a 'decent interval' before the fall of Saigon. The term has been most strongly identified with Frank Snepp, a foremost critic of the US involvement in the last stages of the war in Vietnam. Snepp alleges that one of the architects of the accord, then US National Security Adviser, Henry Kissinger, never seriously intended the Agreement to work anyway and was 'merely trying through its convolutions' to secure a 'decent interval' between the US withdrawal and the fight to the finish among the two contending Vietnamese parties.[1] The 'only thing' the Paris Agreement did guarantee, Snepp continued, was a US withdrawal from Vietnam which depended on American actions 'alone'.[2] Kissinger was then obliged in the Agreement's aftermath to apply 'political and military salves' to prop up the Nguyen Van Thieu regime which only weakened it further.[3]

Stanley Karnow's monumental work on Vietnam alleges the Paris Agreement's 'only accomplishment' was to stop the conflict pending a political solution which 'might never be achieved'.[4] He regards the US disengagement in South Vietnam following the

accord as only allowing the Thieu regime to gain time, a 'decent interval' in which to resist the communist challenge.

These views have much in common with that of Arnold Isaacs, who said only the two signatories who negotiated the accord, the US and North Vietnam, derived anything from it.Washington managed to disengage militarily and Hanoi won an end to the bombing and a US withdrawal from the South. Only South Vietnam received nothing, 'neither a political settlement nor a peace'.[5] What the US really wanted, Isaacs continued, was 'some form of honourable compromise' that would not represent a visible, humiliating defeat of American objectives.[6] Whether this also meant an 'indefinite survival' of a non-communist US-backed regime in the South is questionable since he reproaches the Agreement for being full of provisions that would almost certain ly prove 'unworkable' in Vietnamese conditions.

Existing literature on the Paris Agreement have thus been inclined to focus primarily on the US-Vietnamese relationship. The outcome of the 'peace' has also been examined in purely military terms. Guenther Lewy for instance, has sought to explain American strategy and tactics and the travail of Vietnamisation. He consults classified information about the war contained in the archives of the US military services in the form of after-action reports of military operations, command directives, field reports and staff studies on the pacification effort.[7] Relying on empirical records as a method of historical inquiry, he concludes that statistical data was 'one type of evidence' but 'no major conclusion' in his study depended on the accuracy of any particular set of figures.

Many of the conflicts and difficulties associated with implementation of the agreement, according to Walter Scott Dillard, were 'inherent in the nature' of the Paris Agreement and its protocols.[8] The instruments for enforcing the peace, the Two and Four-Party Joint Military Commissions and the International Commission of Control and Supervision (ICCS), were unable to perform their tasks satisfactorily in securing an adequate ceasefire and to see that the accord was fully implemented (See Appendix I). The disparate goals, motives, operating assumptions and actions of the parties to the peace have been blamed for the failure to achieve what the signatories believed they could achieve with the signature of the accord.

The contribution of these works notwithstanding, the 'standard' view was based very much on hindsight, arising from what actually happened in 1975. It was also rooted in sentiment already generated in the anti-war movement in the US during the mid-1960's among those who were convinced that the US could neither win the war, nor secure an adequate peace. Much of the writing has also been concerned with the moral dilemma posed by the war and has appealed to the conscience and ideological fervour of the public at large. There are also those, including Robert Shaplen who suggest that the media played a role in shaping the public assumption that the war was doomed to come to an ignominious end.

The study however seeks to offer a different interpretation of the aftermath of the Paris Agreement of 1973. It seeks to

explore the implications of the accord through a detailed account of the changing situation between January 1973 and August 1974. The intention is to relate the implications of the Agreement to international realities and to consider whether under some circumstances it could have 'worked'.

A study of the Paris peace in international perspective requires that attention be paid simultaneously to decision-making on all sides. The main thrust of the study is the interraction between the US and Asian protagonists, considered on their own terms. In Indochina the latter include North Vietnam and the Cambodian resistance and the government of South Vietnam. Hanoi's decisions are also examined in that perspective.

The study also undertakes to examine the consequences of the Paris Agreement for East Asia where it complemented new realities emerging there entailing the cooperation between China and Japan. From this perspective the Japan-China dialogue, the assumptions of US strategy in Indochina and East Asia and the diplomacy surrounding them are given more weight than in existing studies.

Some consideration where pertinent, is given to the decisions of the other protagonists, including the Soviet Union and France, which made a significant impact on the course of events in Indochina. Moscow had an interest in preventing further tension in Vietnam from interfering with improved East-West detente in Europe and its relations with

Hanoi. France's role in the resolution of the Cambodian conflict, along the lines of a negotiated settlement are also noted, with special reference to the efforts of its Ambassador in Peking.

This thesis is not a study of the negotiation of the Agreement; nor is it a study of Hanoi's decision to resume the offensive, which was still in balance in 1973 and early 1974; nor yet again, is it a military history of the ceasefire period.

Beginning with the actual circumstances of January 1973 the study attempts to chart the detailed course of events by examining the assumptions of both the US and the Asian protagonists. Their respective motives are identified as far as possible to demonstrate how they were interrelated and what they were intended to achieve across the spectrum of Indochina and East Asia. An attempt is made to identify the changing phases critical to the outcome of the accord to suggest how and why the situation developed in the 18 months following the Agreement. Finally we must consider how the Agreement ultimately collapsed after it lost all credibility and was no longer a possible framework for peace in Vietnam and Indochina.

A central feature of this study is to demonstrate that the Paris Agreement was concerned with the survival of South Vietnam and was intended to establish there, a possible framework for future stability and economic development through multilateral aid and reconstruction. The study

addresses itself to this aspect of the Paris Agreement by emphasising broadly three themes.

Distinct emphasis is given to the role of Japan, who acting with the US, attempted to make a central contribution to this economic dimension. In South Vietnam, within the context of the Paris Agreement, Japan pursued a strategy for rehabilitation and reconstruction aimed at stability in the Indochinese peninsula. A vital part of this design, was a joint international effort to establish an aid consortium for South Vietnam, entailing the cooperation of Japan, the World Bank (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The proposal was directed towards eventual economic self-sufficiency there.

An important component of the equation was the oil factor. The exploration and eventual discovery of oil off the coast of South Vietnam and its possible part as a basis for the continued survival and economic viability of South Vietnam are also investigated. The study considers in particular the growing significance of the oil question after October 1973, within the overall context of the 'peace' and its impact on other decisions.

The study also argues that underpinning the intended structure of peace in South Vietnam, was a design to open a dialogue with North Vietnam, not dissimilar to the US rapprochement with China in 1972. The aim was to inaugurate a

process whereby Hanoi's commitment to take the South by force might be assuaged. The US hoped to establish a post-war relationship with Hanoi to lay the foundations for reconstruction and possible normalisation of relations.

China hailed the Paris Agreement as an achievement for North Vietnam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government in South Vietnam (PRG) because it ended the US involvement there. The settlement of the Vietnam question was now the preserve of its peoples, to be pursued free from external intervention. But China feared possible Soviet domination in the wake of the US withdrawal and preferred an uneasy co-existence between North and South Vietnam, rather than an Indochina dictated by Hanoi. Peking as opposed to Hanoi, did not call for the abolition of South Vietnam or the resignation of its President, Nguyen Van Thieu. Favouring stability in Indochina, which implicitly meant stability for Asia as a whole, China advocated the reconstruction of both North and South Vietnam.

Following the normalisation of relations in September 1972, China encouraged Japan, under the auspices of the China-Japan dialogue, to participate in this process. From January 1973 onwards Tokyo engaged in dialogue with Hanoi aimed at normalising diplomatic relations and possibly, at eventual exploitation of the economic potential of North Vietnam, in the form of oil.

This framework was dependent entirely on the military and security situation stabilising in both Vietnam and Cambodia. Some attention is given to the situation on the ground following the signature of the accord where it had an effect on its outcome.

A related purpose is to demonstrate how the North Vietnamese gradually and after long debate, came to the conclusion that the Americans would let South Vietnam collapse and how Hanoi reached the decision to challenge the Paris Agreement. In particular Hanoi worked to secure a complete American withdrawal to strengthen its grip on the South. Different groups within the leadership argued variously for a prolonged but deliberate respite and a lightning offensive as the best means of attaining the latter goal.

It is not possible to consider the survival of South Vietnam without also taking into account the events in Cambodia. Cambodia's continued existence as an independent nation and the possibility of a negotiated peace there hinged to a very large extent on the outcome of the Paris Agreement on Vietnam. We need to consider the differences between the Khmer factions in their perception of the 'peace' from January 1973 onwards, together with the US-China dialogue and the roles of China, and of France, in the search for a negotiated settlement.

Some may argue that a comprehensive historical investigation of the subject is impossible until unrestricted access to government archives is permitted under the 'thirty year rule' or its equivalent in 'open societies'.

Where the US is concerned, the White House Papers of each presidency have been housed since the 1940's in a Presidential Library, under the auspices of the Office of Presidential Libraries of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA, independent government agency, formerly NARS). The US presidents immediately preceding and following Richard Nixon have had their papers housed respectively at the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library at the University of Texas in Austin, the Gerald R. Ford Library at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and the Jimmy Carter Library at Atlanta, Georgia.

However given the circumstances surrounding the departure of Nixon from office in August 1974, it was not possible for some time to establish a Nixon Presidential Library. Against his wishes, the White House records of his presidency (1969 -74) were eventually transferred to the National Archives in 1986. Some of these records were opened under the auspices of the Nixon Presidential Materials Project housed in a NARA building in Alexandria, Virginia. One element of the collection belongs to the 'White House Special Files' created by Nixon in September 1972 to take in especially sensitive files, but they concerned domestic politics rather then national security issues.

It was not until 19 July 1990 that the Richard M. Nixon Library and Birthplace was opened at Yorba Linda, California. Although it contains Nixon's Congressional and vice-presiden -tial papers, the library will apparently only hold copies of the presidential papers, and only a very careful selection of them. The originals are stored in a government warehouse at Alexandria, Virginia. Nixon managed however to succeed in blocking the release of some 150,000 pages of important documents.

These limitations are compounded by the fact that then National Security Adviser and later Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger's papers have been deposited in the Library of Congress and will not be opened for some fifty years. An attempt in 1980 to have them declared subject to the manda-tory classification review system failed in the courts.

These restrictions make it necessary to rely substantially on the Kissinger memoirs: The White House Years and esp-ecially, the Years of Upheaval for an insight into the Paris Agreement and its aftermath. However this material has to be understood in the context of the wider machinery of gov-ernment and of the foreign policy ambitions of the Nixon years.

There is a need to place the Nixon presidency in histori-cal perspective and to relate the Paris Agreement to his objectives in Asia in terms of his worldwide 'structure of peace'. Nixon's view of China's place in Asia and the world and his rapprochement with Peking eased the way for the

signature of the accord. The search for 'outside powers' particularly China and Japan, to lend a moderating influence on the peace in Indochina and to work together for stability there and in Asia as a whole has been a pronounced feature of his design. Nixon's attempts to broaden Japan's involvement with Vietnam to become an active participant in its postwar reconstruction, opening up in the process Japan's own dialogue with North Vietnam, have made a particular impact on Tokyo's subsequent emergence in the region.

In this context Nixon's foreign policy ideas expressed in his Foreign Policy Reports and in various messages to the US Congress from 1973-74 have provided a useful source of official thinking on Capitol Hill. US Congressional documentation in the form of hearings, prints and reports from both the House of Representatives and the Senate also make them an indispensable source, on the US side. Use was made of official government publications of the period, especially the Department of State Bulletin, which offered a valuable interpretation of the complexities of foreign affairs. Newspapers, particularly The New York Times and The International Herald Tribune were also consulted.

In Hanoi, Peking and Moscow the archives of the party, state and government look likely to remain forever closed making it impossible to delve into records of decision-making in these places. It is difficult therefore to study the internal debates and ideological struggles within their respective communist parties. However a body of information surfacing in the form of monitored broadcasts might give insight into the complexities of the different 'lines of action' and alternative strategies advocated by different sections of the leadership at different times. It is essential to subject this material to careful analysis.

Primary sources relevant to this effort thus include monitored news materials from the communist world to be found in the British Broadcasting Corporation's Summary of World Broadcasts, a major part of which can be found in its transmissions for the Far East (SWB/FE). Translations here from news reports and broadcasts of articles in the Vietnamese press include those from Nhan Dan, Quan Doi Nhan Dan, Hoc Tap and the Vietnam News Agency (VNA). Those from the Chinese radio include articles from Renmin Ribao, and New China News Agency (NCNA). On the Soviet side, news transmissions from Moscow can be found in the Summary of World Broadcasts, Soviet Union, (SWB/SU) which contains articles from Pravda, Izvestiya and TASS. Since 1975 more revelations from Hanoi and Peking have surfaced, particular-

ly in the SRV Foreign Ministry White Book on Relations with China, 4,5,6 October 1979 (SWB/FE/6238/A3/1-16) and SWB/FE/6242/A3/1-20 and the PRK (People's Republic of Kampuchea) White Book on China- Cambodia Relations, released by the PRK Foreign Ministry on 10 July 1984, (SWB/FE/7703/C/1-34).

(Material from the Federal Broadcasting Information Services (FBIS) relevant for the period under study have not however been consulted.)

On Cambodia, the primary sources are as above, to be found in the BBC's Summary of World Broadcasts, Far East, (SWB/FE) with transmissions from the Voice of the NUFC, (The Front for the National Union of Cambodia) and AKI. There is a need to differentiate these from official publications in the form of The Black Paper, Facts and Evidence of the Acts of Aggression and Annexation of Vietnam against Kampuchea, published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Democratic Kampuchea, 1978 and Dossier Kampuchea, Volumes I-III, edited by Le Courrier du Vietnam, (Hanoi, 1978) which form part of the sources on Cambodia.

Colonel-General Tran Van Tra's account of the last two years of the Vietnam War, Vietnam: History of the Bulwark B2 Theatre, Vol.5: Concluding the Thirty Years War, which was translated in February 1983 by the Joint Publications Research Service (JPRS) in Arlington, Virginia makes a contribution from the South Vietnamese communist angle. It

might be useful to mention here that the work, which gives some evidence of the extent of the debate and disagreements in Hanoi about the conduct of the war in the South, appeared in Ho Chi Minh City in 1982, after which the author was placed under house arrest for two to three years and 'disappeared'. Other material from the communist world include the memoirs of Van Tien Dung, Our Great Spring Victory; Hoang Van Hoan, A Drop in the Ocean; Enver Hoxha, Reflections on China, Volume 2, 1973-77 and Andrei Gromyko, Memories.

For an account of how South Vietnam perceived the last years of the war, particularly in relation to the economic aspect of the Paris Agreement, it is possible to consult The Palace File by Nguyen Tien Hung and Jerrold Schecter. The authors have relied extensively on the hitherto secret correspondence between US Presidents Nixon and Ford and South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu from 31 December 1971 to 22 March 1975. The Final Collapse by Cao Van Vien, Thieu's last chief of the Joint General Staff has been used for insight into how the South Vietnamese military saw the last stages of the war and for the part the discovery of oil might have played in reviving the war effort.

The importance of the discovery and confirmation of oil in South Vietnam and its possible part in economic reconstruction aimed at eventual self-sufficiency cannot be overstated. Saigon's invitations to international bidding of its

concessions in 1973 and 1974 were made in anticipation of larger ambitions: The prospect of eventual stability in Indochina and an economic 'takeoff' in South Vietnam comparable to that of South Korea or Taiwan is daunting.

Japan's forays into both North and South Vietnam and its own capacity as 'arbiter' of the peace will be given special prominence in this work. The Japanese dimension of this study has been gleaned from the proliferation of Japanese newsaper articles, in the Asahi Shimbun, Mainichi Shimbun and Nihon Keizai Shimbun amongst others, available in translation in the form of the Daily Summary of the Japanese Press (DSJP). These news materials have been utilised to establish a coherent picture of the US and Japanese views of events in Indochina.

The result is to allow one to get a more comprehensive picture of US diplomacy and perceptions and some 'behind-the-scenes' information, of North Vietnam's diplomacy and glimpses of its decision-making, of events on the ground in Vietnam and Cambodia and of the 'Asian' dimension of the study, particularly the Chinese and Japanese aspects. The attempt may not be definitive, but might give an insight into understanding the actualities of the period which takes us further than previous American-centric studies.

NOTES:

1. Frank Snepp, Decent Interval, (London, Allen Lane, 1980); p.52.
2. Ibid., p.50.
3. Ibid., p.63.
4. Stanley Karnow, Vietnam: A History, (London, Guild Publishing, 1983); p.654.
5. Arnold R.Isaacs, Without Honor, (London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983); p.68.
6. Ibid., p.69.
7. Guenther Lewy, America in Vietnam, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1978).
8. Walter Scott Dillard, Sixty Days to Peace, (Washington, D.C., National Defense University, 1982).

CHAPTER I

THE SETTING

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 1973

'I believed then, and I believe now, that the Agreement could have worked. It reflected a true equilibrium of forces on the ground. If the equilibrium were maintained, the agree -ment could have been maintained. We believed that Saigon was strong enough to deal with guerrilla war and low-level violations. The implicit threat of our retaliation would be likely to deter massive violations. We hoped that with the programme of assistance for all Indochina, including North Vietnam, promised by two Presidents of both parties, we might possibly even turn Hanoi's attention (and manpower) to tasks of construction if the new realities took hold for a sufficient period of time. Hanoi was indeed instructing its cadres in the South to prepare for a long period of political competition. We could use our new relationships with Moscow and Peking to foster restraint.

We had no illusions about Hanoi's long-term goals. Nor did we go through the agony of four years of war and sear- ing negotiations simply to achieve a 'decent interval' for our withdrawal. We were determined to do our utmost to enable Saigon to grow in security and prosperity so that it

could prevail in any political struggle. We sought not an interval before collapse, but lasting peace with honour. But for the collapse of executive authority as a result of Watergate, I believe we would have succeeded.'

Henry Kissinger*

'The United States leaves us without any alternative except that if we sign, aid will continue and there is a pledge of retaliation if the agreements are violated. Other -wise they will leave us alone. Kissinger treats both Viet-nams as adversaries. He considers himself as an outsider in these negotiations and does not distinguish between South Vietnam, as an ally, and North Vietnam, as an enemy.....'

Nguyen Van Thieu**

* Henry Kissinger, The White House Years, (London, Weiden-feld & Nicolson, 1979), p.1470.

** Nguyen Tien Hung & Jerrold L. Schecter, The Palace File, New York, Harper & Row, 1986), p.145.

I : I

THE PARIS AGREEMENT

27 JANUARY 1973

At the initialling on 23 January 1973 of the Paris Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam, the North Vietnamese view as indicated by 'Special Advisor' Le Duc Tho was that it inaugurated a 'new atmosphere', to be the 'first stone' marking a new relationship between Washington and Hanoi.[1] The Agreement was interpreted as representing the fulfilment of two American objectives: One objective sought to maintain the status quo and prolong the division of Vietnam through the containment and isolation of Hanoi; Detente with Hanoi's allies, Moscow and Peking, who were its chief arms suppliers might bring about the second objective of draining it of munitions to force it to end the war.

Hanoi's own aims were to secure the American withdrawal from South Vietnam, weaken the Thieu regime and strengthen its own and Viet Cong forces there. Tho publicly discounted the existence of the 'so-called' North Vietnamese forces in South Vietnam, completely rejecting the idea since in the accord there was 'not a single word' implying their presence[2] (Appendix I).

Behind Tho's emphasis on the 'loose nature' of the main provisions of the Agreement was Hanoi's intent to reunify the country. Tho referred to the current Agreement as stipulating that the 17th parallel was 'only a provisional military demarcation line' not a political or territorial boundary (Ch.V:Article 15(A)). It was also stated in the Agreement that the two zones of Vietnam should consult each other as soon as possible to reunify the country. On this basis Tho asserted, the Vietnamese people would advance to the reunification of the country, a 'necessity of history' which no force could prevent. Repeatedly questioning the ability of the South Vietnamese factions to create a 'great national union' (Ch.IV:Article 12), he implicitly warned that as long as 'imperialism' existed, there would be war.[3]

In Hanoi the Paris Agreement represented a 'partial victory' and was seen as laying a firm foundation for Vietnam's revolutionary cause. The North Vietnamese Party and Government appeal of 28 January said the accord ushered in a 'new turning point' and provided the basis for the Vietnamese ~~peo~~ people to march forward to 'new victories'.[4]

The Vietnam People's Army (PAVN) in Hanoi interpreted the contents of the Agreement as having met all four 'basic demands' it had made in the past; that the US respect the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Vietnam; withdraw all US and vassal troops, dismantle its military bases and pledge not to continue its military invol

-vement or intervene in the internal affairs of South Vietnam so that its people could determine their own political future; that the PRG be recognised as one of the two South Vietnamese sides and that in South Vietnam, two administrations, two armies and two zones of control be acknowledged and that the US pay war reparations.[5]

On the ground in South Vietnam where the war was being fought, specifically the area known to the Viet Cong as B-2 other views were declared. Tran Van Tra, Head of its military delegation to the Two-Party Joint Military Commission (JMC), described the Agreement as the 'clearest manifestation' of the balance of forces on the battlefield at the time. Its signature rested on the basis of the 'enemy' and of themselves weighing the strengths and weaknesses of each other and of the balance of forces in the world.[6] The Americans had been willing to accept a 'partial defeat', Tra conceded, but it was really the PAVN that had won a 'victory' albeit not as yet a 'complete victory'.

The withdrawal of 'all US and vassal troops' from South Vietnam was singled out by Tran Van Tra as the 'most important provision' of the Agreement which affected the conduct of war as a whole. On the battlefield the 'balance of forces changed in an important way in North Vietnam's favour.[7] From then onwards South Vietnam's 'puppet troops' were forced to fight alone without the effective aid and support of the US.

South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu described the Paris Agreement as 'only a ceasefire agreement' giving no guarantee of a stable long-lasting peace.[8] While the Agreement ended the 'first phase' of his country's struggle, the defeat of communist military aggression, the 'next phase' as Thieu saw it, would be a political struggle, to resolve the question of who would govern South Vietnam. Cao Van Vien, the last chief of the Joint General Staff (JGS) of the South Vietnamese Armed Forces, said the accord was an 'imperfect agreement'.[9] The circumstances leading to the signature of the Paris Agreement made it the turning point which set South Vietnam on its relentless course towards decline and finally, total collapse. In theory, the accord terminated the war but while true peace prevailed in the North, military conflict continued in the South. No clause in the agreement, Vien argued, called for the withdrawal of communist forces, nor was there any understanding about keeping them at bay. North Vietnam maintained its large forces in the South to back an eventual settlement to its advantage while standing ready to cope with all eventualities. There could be no peace, Vien said, unless 'one side prevailed' and forced the other to surrender unconditionally.[10]

Nguyen Tien Hung, Thieu's Special Assistant for Economic Reconstruction, believed the Paris Agreement 'contained the seeds' for South Vietnam's destruction. He chronicles in

The Palace File how the American demands for the North Vietnamese withdrawal of troops from South Vietnam were undermined through successive negotiations until the US 'capitulated to Hanoi's demands' for a ceasefire-in-place with neither a regroupment of its forces nor provisions for its removal.[11]

President Thieu's major preoccupations were the North Vietnamese presence in the South, the status of the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ), the supervisory mechanism and Hanoi's potential violation of the Agreement, of which clearly the first was the most critical.[12] This was complicated by the fact that Hanoi did not see its troops in South Vietnam as 'outside forces' because Article I of the accord said in effect that Vietnam was one country (Appendix I). This clause also calls into question the status of the DMZ separating North and South Vietnam. To Hanoi the DMZ was thus a 'temporary separation line'; to Thieu, it was an international boundary between North and South, formalising the separation of the two countries to deny North Vietnam's claims that North and South were one. The definition of the DMZ was critical to Thieu's reasoning that North Vietnamese troops were 'foreign' to South Vietnam.[13]

The essence of US National Security Adviser, Henry Kissinger's strategy as embodied in the Paris Agreement of 27 January 1973 was to maintain an 'equilibrium of forces' on the ground in South Vietnam.[14] The idea embodied a ceasefire with the armed forces of the two Vietnamese parties

remaining-in-place (Ch.II: Articles 2,3) pending the 60-day withdrawal of US and other foreign forces from South Vietnam. The dismantling of all US military bases there (Ch.II: 6) would be accompanied by a flat prohibition against the introduction of 'any outside military forces' (Ch.II:7). Kissinger believed that if the equilibrium 'between the forces that existed on the ground' in South Vietnam was upset, the alternative would be recourse to continued or renewed war.

Despite these ambiguities, the Paris Agreement secured a separation of two vital issues, the military and the political (Appendix I). US President Richard Nixon consistently held the view that a settlement should involve the specific resolution of military questions alone.[15] The final settlement endorsed by its signatories, the USA, North Vietnam, South Vietnam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam (PRG) embodied this principle. Militarily the Agreement guaranteed the disengagement of American forces and brought to an end their active combat involvement in Vietnam. An immediate ceasefire-in-place and the withdrawal of all remaining US troops within 60 days (Ch.II:Article 5) and the release of American prisoners of war was also secured over the same period of time (Ch.III:Article 8).

Nixon had refused already in November 1972 to make any express reference in the accord to the North Vietnamese forces because it could have the 'disadvantage of legitimising' any

force that might remain and was also 'unobtainable'.[16] There was therefore no provision for the one fundamental question affecting the very balance of forces on the ground.

In early January 1973 Nixon persuaded Thieu that the problem of the North Vietnamese troops in the South was 'manageable under the agreement'.[17] Nixon's letter of 16 January 1973 to Thieu additionally informed him that the US did not in principle accept the right of North Vietnamese troops in the South. In practice they would remain because the US had not negotiated their withdrawal as part of the Agreement except in the vaguest terms calling for the removal of all 'outside forces'.[18]

At its signature on 24 January 1973 Kissinger emphasised that 'nothing' in the Agreement established the right of North Vietnamese troops to be in the South. If the accord was scrupulously implemented, he believed the estimated 145,000 North Vietnamese troops there should 'over a period of time' be subject to attrition.[19] He proposed to do this by having a flat prohibition against the introduction into South Vietnam of any outside military forces including troops, armaments, munitions and war material (Ch.II: Article 7).

The idea of attrition was also implicit in the prohibition against the use of infiltration corridors in Cambodia and Laos (Ch.II:Article 20). 'Foreign countries' were to put an end to

all military activities, totally withdraw and refrain from reintroducing military forces there. Under these conditions North Vietnamese troops might be cut off from any possibility of renewed infiltration into South Vietnam through Cambodia and Laos. Their resupply would also be curtailed. Another safeguard was implicit in the prohibition against military movement of any kind across the DMZ (Ch.V:Article 15).

Kissinger was adamant that the issue of the DMZ had been given priority. A demarcation line which defined the territory of South Vietnam was 'essential' he said, to the idea of equilibrium. He saw it as a definition of where the obligations of the Agreement began, augmenting the military provisions with respect to infiltration and replacement.[20] In the text of the Agreement however, the 'military demarcation line' between the two zones at the 17th parallel was 'only provisional' and 'not a political or territorial boundary' (Ch.V:Article 15(A)). The wording of this clause hence appeared more sympathetic to Hanoi than Saigon.

Nixon might have had his reasons for accepting this clause. According to Hung, he was confident that the US was capable of detecting North Vietnamese infiltration in the South. A secret contingency plan worked out with the Joint Chiefs of Staff had been discussed to keep North Vietnam targeting information updated 'even after the ceasefire'. A communications network was established moreover which connected the US Seventh Air Force Base at Nakorn Phanom

in Thailand with Saigon and four regional military headquarters in South Vietnam. The plan made a major impact and was a 'tangible guarantee' reassuring Thieu that the US was committed to enforcement of the Agreement.[21]

The machinery for enforcement of the ceasefire in South Vietnam included an International Commission for Control and Supervision (ICCS) consisting of members from Canada, Hungary, Indonesia and Poland which would oversee the implementation and enforcement of the truce between all parties throughout South Vietnam (Ch.VI:Article 18). The ICCS would operate in accordance with the principles of consultations and unanimity. The Four-Party Joint Military Commission (JMC) formed by the signatories of the Agreement would ensure 'joint action' by these parties and conduct preliminary investigations into violations. Beginning its tasks immediately after the Agreement's signature, it would end its activity in 60 days leaving only a Two-Party JMC consisting of the two South Vietnamese parties (Ch.VI:Articles 16,17).

The convening of an international conference on Vietnam in Paris within 30 days of the Agreement was suggested by the US for 26 February 1973, to acknowledge and enforce the accord internationally (Ch.VI:Article 19). Its participants would include the four signatory parties to the accord, the four permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (China, France, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom) the four members of the ICCS and the Secretary General of the United Nations (UN).

In reality, neither the ICCS nor the signatories of the Act of the International Conference could effectively enforce the peace. It was to be enforced only by the US. According to Hung, Nixon had informed Thieu in November 1972 that 'we both must recognise' that the supervisory mechanism in itself was 'no measure as important' as both parties' firm determination to see to it that the Agreement worked and their vigilance with respect to the prospect of its violations.[22]

The Paris Agreement also attempted to resolve the question of the political future of South Vietnam which might be imposed by outsiders (i.e. the North Vietnamese) or be competitively shaped by the South Vietnamese themselves.[23] Politically the Agreement was aimed at entrusting the future of Vietnam to the contending South Vietnamese parties themselves. The right of its people to 'self-determination' was guaranteed (Ch.IV). A joint statement by the US and North Vietnam affirmed that they should decide 'for themselves' the political system of their choice through democratic elections under international supervision (Ch.IV:Article 9(B)). Immediately after the cease-fire the two South Vietnamese parties would hold consultations to set up a National Council for National Reconciliation and Concord (NCNRC) composed of three 'equal segments'. The NCNRC by unanimous vote would shape Saigon's future government and supervistelections leading to it but the 'unanimity' rule postponed this indefinitely. The parties would sign

an agreement on internal matters of South Vietnam 'as soon as possible' and accomplish this 'within 90 days' after the cease-fire comes into effect (Ch.IV:Article 12).

The unification of Vietnam and the relationship between North and South Vietnam was also defined (Ch.V:Article 15). It was to be carried out 'step-by-step' through 'peaceful means' on the basis of discussions and agreements between the two parties 'without coercion or annexation' and 'without foreign interference'. The time for reunification would be the prerogative of these parties themselves.

Of special interest in this work is the postwar relationship between the US and North Vietnam (Ch.VIII:Article 21). The US would 'contribute to healing the wounds of war' and to postwar reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) and 'throughout Indochina'. This clause tied in with Article 14 which stated that the political entity of 'South Vietnam' would accept 'economic and technical aid from any country with no political conditions attached'. The Agreement was careful to ensure that the political entity of South Vietnam whose continued existence was guaranteed, would only accept military aid under the authority of the government set up after the general elections (Ch.IV:Article 14).

It is significant to note in this context that Kissinger had earlier informed the then South Vietnamese Ambassador to London, Vuong Van Bac, that the Paris Agreement provided

a 'legal basis' for the US to support South Vietnam.[24] American support for the RVN had hitherto relied on presidential pronouncements, but the Agreement now provided a 'legal foundation' for requesting Congress for more aid to Vietnam.

But how did 'outside powers' view the Paris Agreement and what were their interests, if any, in the postwar situation in Indochina?

The Soviet Union equally had as its ultimate objective the reunification of Vietnam. A prospect for national accord and unification was opening up before South Vietnam, Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) told Le Duc Tho in Moscow on 30 January.[25] The accord was interpreted as an 'important point' in Vietnam and in international affairs that would have a 'positive effect' on Soviet-American relations.

To both Moscow and Hanoi, the reunification of Vietnam presupposed 'continued conflict'. Before the beginning of the last set of negotiations with Kissinger in Paris, Le Duc Tho had emphasised in Moscow on 5 January 1973, the Vietnamese people's determination to 'continue' the 'just struggle' for 'basic national rights'.[26] In talks at that point with Andrei Kirilenko, Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, the 'legitimate right' of peoples to decide for themselves how their internal affairs be ordered was emphasised.

Brezhnev saw the war in the context of detente. On 11 January he described the war as drawing 'little by little' to its conclusion and suggested Moscow's specific interest by asserting that the future evolution of Soviet-American relations largely depended on how the war was concluded.[27]

Moscow indicated particularly strongly its anxiety for peace in a message sent on 27 January when the Soviet triumvirate, Brezhnev, Podgorny and Kosygin described the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) as the 'outpost of socialism' in Southeast Asia.[28] The withdrawal of US forces under the ceasefire would provide 'favourable conditions' for a 'final and just settlement' of the Vietnam problem through unification of North and South. The Soviet message while looking to the ultimate triumph of Hanoi, envisaged such a process as proceeding in two stages: The first was the achievement of a 'peaceful, democratic and neutral Vietnam', a formula that apparently implied the ultimate removal of the Saigon leadership from power; the second stage leading to the 'final and just settlement' of the Vietnam problem would be the unification of Vietnam in accordance with the expectations of the people 'without foreign interference'.[29]

The establishment of peace in Vietnam could promote peace and security in Asia, the Kremlin leadership urged in obvious reference to the preamble of the Agreement (Appendix I). Moscow saw this as being strengthened however by the 'forces of world socialism, national liberation and progress

which would help ease 'international tension'. The Soviet Union counted on seeing a Vietnamese presence in this context. The consolidation of 'unity, cohesion and joint development' of both socialist countries, Brezhenv emphasised to Tho on 30 January 1973, was a 'matter of principle'.[30]

These views were superficially similar to those voiced by the authorities in Peking. The Chinese daily Renmin Ribao publicly welcomed the initialling of the Paris Agreement on 23 January 1973 as an event signifying the 'victory' of the people of Vietnam.[31] In their official message of 27 January to Hanoi's leaders, Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai and Zhu De urged the people of the North to achieve 'new success' in consolidating and building socialism in the DRV. The South in contrast, was encouraged under its 'authentic representative', the National Liberation Front (NLF) and the PRG together with the other two political forces, to speedily set up the NCNRC.[32]

Peking saw two possibilities for Indochina in the period following the Paris Agreement: either the settlement of the Vietnam question by peaceful means and its reunification - the probability of which was 'not great' - or resolution by by the use of force which meant eventual war.[33]

Premier Zhou Enlai urged restraint on the part of Hanoi. To continue fighting he said, would not produce instant results and the question of 'liberating' South Vietnam could be considered later. Having compelled the US to withdraw

through negotiations the Vietnamese would be left with 'half to one year' for rest and consolidation.[34] During that time Zhou emphasised economic reconstruction of Vietnam which might be achieved through 'self-reliance' although the reconstruction of both North and South Vietnam would require 'international support'. He warned however that the Soviet Union would 'intensify economic aid' to the Vietnamese people after the war which would 'balance out our influence' there so that the struggle could become 'complicated and acute'.[35]

The Agreement, Zhou observed, concerned itself only with Vietnam and excluded the problems of Cambodia and Laos. The 'current situation' in Cambodia was described as 'good' since Lon Nol controlled only a small area while Sihanouk remained 'tough and resolute'. Peace in Indochina as a whole was only 'temporary,' the Premier said, if the war was to break out again it was unlilkely to invite further US intervention.[36]

On a larger scale the Paris Agreement served China's interests as well as those of Southeast Asia. Its signature would aggravate the 'contradictions' between the US and the Soviet Union in Indochina.[37] On 18 January Zhou had referred to a 'certain superpower's ambitions' to make wholesale inroads into Asia and to expand its sphere of influence there.[38] Increasingly China shared an interest with the US that took precedence over Chinese concern with Vietnam. This was to maintain a global balance of power in the face of what was

perceived as the Soviet threat which Peking meant to make every effort to contain in Indochina. The Agreement, if fully implemented, was seen as removing an obstacle to improved Sino-American relations; if it came apart the Chinese would be forced to jeopardise their relations with the US on Hanoi's behalf. Peking wished to put the war behind it. The war had hindered the objectives that China set itself for the future, a resolution of the Taiwan issue on the lines laid down by the Shanghai Communique of February 1972 and formal diplomatic ties with Washington and Tokyo.[39]

I : II

THE INDOCHINA PERSPECTIVE : VIETNAM

'...Vietnam takes on a different perspective for itself and for us when it is an appendage to the landmass of Asia than when you make it a test case to stop a unified Communist thrust across the whole world. When Hanoi realised that (US) foreign policy could not be blocked by the Vietnam War forever, and when we realised that there was more to Asia than Vietnam, we could conduct our negotiations in a different framework.'

Henry Kissinger*

1 February 1973

* Dr. Kissinger interviewed for CBS Television in DSB, 2 April 1973, p.395.

In Washington the postwar relationship between the US and Vietnam was being shaped. The Paris Agreement, Nixon said on 23 January 1973, was 'only the first step' towards building a 'stable peace' in Indochina and Southeast Asia.[40] America's contribution towards this end entailed 'healing the wounds of war' and postwar reconstruction of the DRV and throughout Indochina as provided for in Article 21.

On his return from Paris Kissinger officially visited Congress for the first time on 26 January 1973. In a fullscale briefing on the accord he promised Congressional members they would be consulted before the Nixon Administration made any firm commitment to Hanoi on postwar reconstruction aid programmes. In this respect the US was ready to accept limitations on military and economic aid to South Vietnam if North Vietnam would accept limitations on the nearly one billion dollars it received annually from its allies.[41] The US was previously described on 9 February 1972 as prepared to undertake a massive US$7.5 billion five-year reconstruction programme in conjunction with an overall agreement in which North Vietnam could share up to US$2.5 billion.[42] Discussion on aid, Kissinger underlined, would only take place after the implementation of the Agreement was 'well-advanced'.

A new debate had started at this juncture on Capitol Hill over attempts to prevent any future US fighting in Indochina. A bill was introduced the same day by Senators Frank Church (Democrat, Idaho) and Clifford Case (Republican, New Jer-

sey) - later termed the Case-Church Amendment - to prohibit the involvement of hostilities 'in and over or from off the shores of North and South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia' without prior specific authorisation by Congress.[43] Aimed at a prohibition of the bombing of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, the bill would take effect 60 days after the signature of the Paris Agreement. Should the Agreement break down, Congressional authorisation was required for any decision involving further US intervention. If the accord hinged on the threat of resumption of US military operations some argued that it was even more fragile than supposed. When questioned, Kissinger refused to indicate what the US might do in this eventuality. He apparently believed that the RVN would emerge ahead in the forthcoming political contest with the Viet Cong.[44]

In the interim Washington embarked on a complementary strategy to assure North Vietnam's Southeast Asian neighbours of continued US support. The visit of Vice-President Spiro Agnew, announced on 28 January, was intended to demonstrate to South Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and Laos the continued US interest in giving them economic aid and whatever military aid was permissible under the accord. To explain the continued American role in Southeast Asia, Agnew would also visit Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.[45] Agnew's visit to Saigon (30 January-1 February) attempted to ease Nguyen Van Thieu's concern about the RVN's future with assurances of continued American backing and

affirmed the US position on 'certain key elements' of the accord. These included Washington's recognition of Thieu's government as the 'sole legitimate government' of South Vietnam, that it did not recognise the 'right of any foreign troops' to remain on South Vietnamese soil and would 'react vigorously' to violations of the Agreement. According to Hung, Agnew failed in Saigon to mention the last point which made Thieu doubt the full extent of the US commitment to react when called to do so.[46]

Agnew's visit to Phnom Penh (1 February) pledged suppor -t for Cambodian demands for the departure of North Vietnamese troops. Peace in Indochina, he said, would be incomplete until a formal ceasefire was achieved in Cambodia and 'all foreign forces' withdrawn.[47] In Vientiane (3 February) Agnew assured Lao Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma of 'continued support' for his government's policies of national reconciliation and neutrality in efforts to achieve a negotiated settlement there, particularly in the post-hostilities period.[48]

In the interim the structure of the framework for peace in Vietnam was taking shape in Washington. In an announcement on 31 January, Nixon said Kissinger would visit Hanoi from 10-13 February 1973 to initiate a dialogue concerning the current state of compliance with the Paris Agreement, to discuss the postwar relationship and the reconstruction programme for all Indochina.[49] Foreign aid in general, whether it was with the North or the South, Nixon added, was aimed

at a 'potential investment' in peace. For the North he hoped that Hanoi would participate with the US and 'other interest -ed countries' in the DRV's reconstruction. Nixon believed that the assistance to North Vietnam might divert Hanoi from pursuing 'regional hegemony' to building up its economy. At the same time the US' newly-established relationships with Moscow and Peking could conceivably help restrain Hanoi from embarking on longterm goals of dominion over its neighbours.

In the longterm Kissinger's visit to Hanoi was viewed in the context of establishing a 'postwar relationship' not dissimilar to his first visit to Peking in July 1971.[50] The intention was to move relations between Hanoi and Washington from 'hostility to normalisation'. A pattern of coexistence might conceivably be established with Hanoi in the light of his own experience of establishing relations with Peking with whom Washington had economic and cultural exchange but no diplomatic ties. While the US favoured establishment of such relations with Hanoi 'in principle', Kissinger's main goal was to initiate a constructive dialogue and to work out the machinery for future exchange of ideas.

Kissinger thought it a challenge to absorb the enormous talents of the people of Indochina in'tasks of construction' rather than in 'tasks of destruction'. Economic aid however was to be construed neither in terms of a 'handout' nor of reconstruction alone, but as an effort to enable Hanoi to work together with other countries, 'particularly Western'

countries' in a 'more constructive relationship' and to provide the impetus for peace.[51]

While encouraging peaceful reconstruction over continued warfare, the purpose of Kissinger's journey to Hanoi intended to stabilise the peace and warn of 'serious consequences' should the Agreement be violated.[52] He made clear however that any forthcoming aid was conditional upon the approval of Congress and on Hanoi's strict implementation of the terms of the Agreement. In Hanoi (10-13 February) Kissinger attempted to persuade Premier Pham Van Dong that a 'strong and independent Vietnam' was not inconsistent with American interests. His agenda stressed three items: the implementation of the ceasefire, normalisation of relations and economic reconstruction.[53]

Already reports from Saigon said hundreds of violations had been committed in the first days of the truce. Some months, Kissinger conceded, were expected to elapse before the settlement accustomed Hanoi to 'more peaceful pursuits'. But on the ground in South Vietnam 'land grabbing' by both sides to seize within the first fortnight of the truce, as many 'zones of control' as possible had not ceased. Kissinger initially reacted by saying this was inevitable since if the zones of control were to be established, they could only coexist 'by testing each other'.[54] The fighting however showed no sign of abating by the time of his Hanoi visit. It seemed possible that both sides were moving into areas they

insisted they had controlled before the ceasefire but independent observers regarded these contested areas as firmly controlled by no one. The ICCS which was to supervise the release of prisoners, troop withdrawals, elections and other aspects of the accord was bogged down by its modus operandi.

Cao Van Vien, Chief of the South Vietnamese JGS observed that the ceasefire gave the communists a chance to 'stay mixed' with South Vietnamese positions in an 'intricate pattern'.[55] The communists, he said, were highly confident of their chance of success on the eve of the Agreement and aimed to exploit the ceasefire by their policy of 'land grabbing' and 'population nibbling'.

Kissinger's visit revealed that Hanoi's ambitions in Vietnam and Indochina were not to be constrained by the Agreement. In his view Hanoi's interpretation of the issue of resupply and infiltration flagrantly transgressed the protocols. Freed from bombing, the Ho Chi Minh Trail had seen the passage of munitions and personnel grow at a more furious pace than during the war, in direct contravention of Article 7. The DMZ in particular saw the transit of material bound not only for South Vietnam but also for Cambodia and Laos in violation of Article 20.[56]

The second item on the agenda, the normalisation of relations between Hanoi and Washington was 'inconclusive'.[57] Hanoi was not ready to establish any formal ties and besides

the International Conference on Vietnam in Paris scheduled to begin on 26 February 1973 had not yet convened to lend international endorsement of the Agreement.

The third item, the economic package, presupposed Congressional approval as well as 'strict implementation' of the accord. While this was made public, what was not divulged was a secret message from Nixon to Pham Van Dong spelling out the procedures for implementing Article 21 which were to be 'voluntary and distinct' from the formal obligations of the Agreement.[58] Delivered to Hanoi on 30 January 1973, the message, drafted by Kissinger had suggested the 'procedures' for discussion of economic aid.

While in Hanoi Kissinger therefore engaged in a general discussion of principles, to set up a Joint Economic Commission (JEC). Intended to design a precise aid programme, the JEC would begin its deliberations in Paris on 15 March 1973. An aid amount to Hanoi of US$3.25 billion over a period of five years was described by Kissinger as an 'appropriate preliminary figure'.[59] Any foreign aid progamme however would be subject to the JEC's recommendations and to Congressional support. The proposals entailed what could be done through existing legislation: Kissinger had brought along to Hanoi documents on 'bilateral and multilateral programmes' in which the US had participated and an outline of various projects that might be included in an aid programme for Vietnam.[60] Whereas it had previously centred on the Agency

for International Development (AID), planning a future aid programme for Indochina was described in Washington on 10 February as 'under the supervision' of Kissinger.[61]

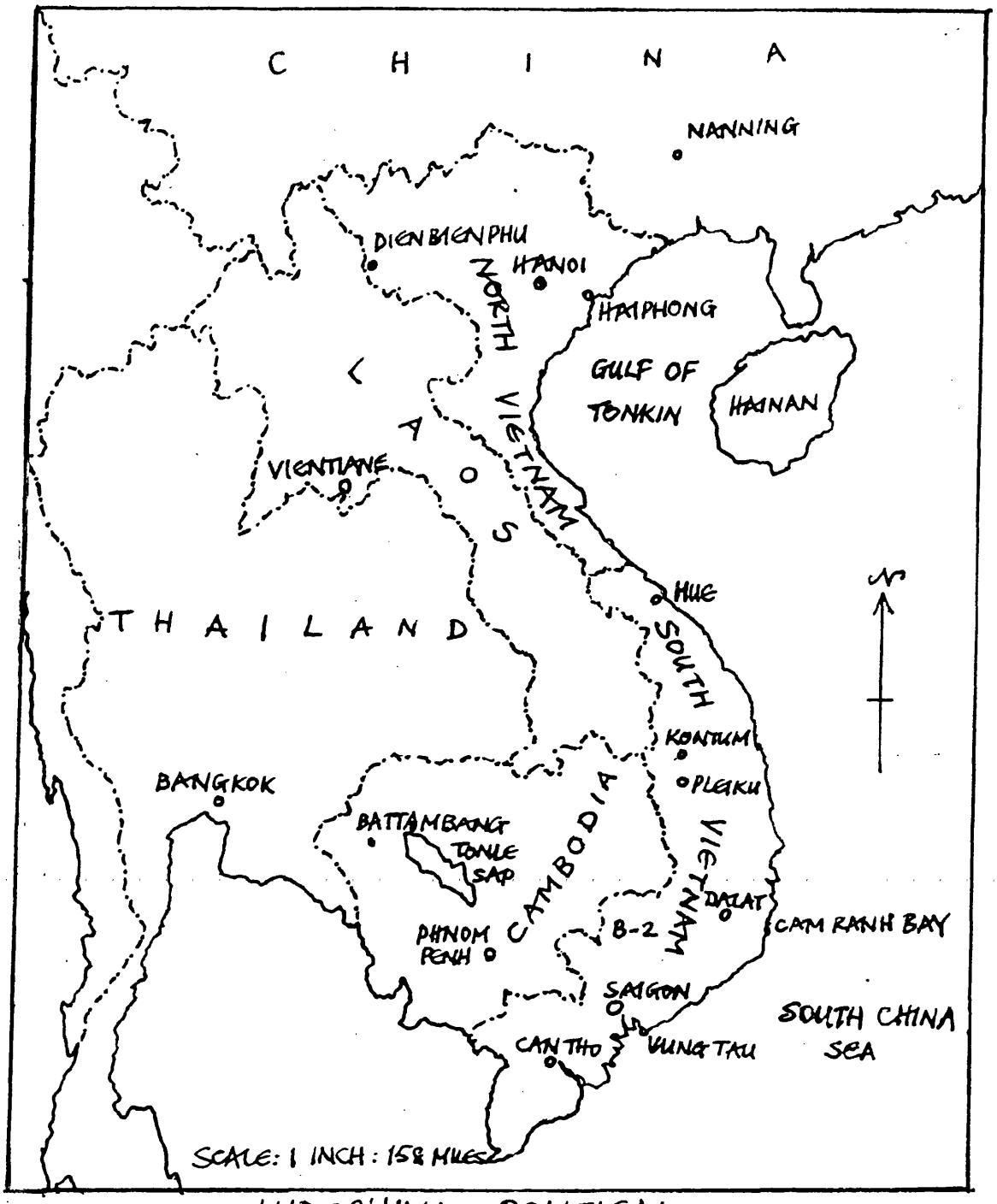
Pham Van Dong however interpreted these legislative procedures as hindrances to what should have been an unmitigated US commitment to aid Vietnam. American assistance, Hanoi insisted, was 'unconditional'. Earlier Le Duc Tho had demanded for North Vietnam the entire package of US$7.5 billion earmarked for all Indochina.[62] The figure originally envisaged in Nixon's 9 February 1972 report had been US $2.5 billion; after much 'haggling' US$3.25 billion was finally settled for.

As for the political provisions of the Agreement, Kissinger found neither Hanoi nor Saigon interested in the setting up of the NCNRC which he believed would ensure Thieu's survival.[63] The provision in the accord that the two South Vietnamese sides should agree to general elections under the Council appeared suspect to both sides. As long as the elections were delayed, Saigon's forces might grow strong enough to prevent serious political gains and subversion by the communists. Conversely, if the elections were scheduled, Saigon saw its position weakened. No agreement would be made by the PRG unless the accord abolished those restrictions written into South Vietnamese election laws. Hanoi seemed to believe that if elections were delayed or evaded they and the Viet Cong would have an excuse to resort to war again, their chief means to victory.

In Paris the three sessions of talks between the two South Vietnamese parties in the interim - 5,7 and 10 February - only concerned themselves with procedural questions for the crucial talks on a settlement.[64] The stalling by both sides was linked by some observers to the form of foreign economic assistance which would be subsequently delivered and administered. Aid was seen as crucial to the forthcoming political process in South Vietnam since the channelling of aid to either party would greatly enhance its political leverage. The idea of American economic aid to the North was acceptable to Thieu if Hanoi did not attack the South.[65]

In Hanoi Pham Van Dong had dropped a dangerous hint of renewed warfare if a new relationship did not develop on a solid basis of mutual interest - suggesting that the accord was only a 'temporary stabilisation' of the peace there.[66]

The tenor of Kissinger's talks in Hanoi however, would be juxtaposed against events elsewhere. Significantly it was to be all 'part of a pattern' including a visit, announced on 3 February, by Kissinger to Peking (15-19 February) for 'concrete consultations' with Chinese leaders in the first high-level meeting after the Vietnam settlement and Nixon's own plan to confer with Thieu in the spring.



INDOCHINA: POLITICAL
1973

Source:
The Reader's Digest
Great World Atlas,
(London, 1962).

I : III

THE INDOCHINA PERSPECTIVE : CAMBODIA

'Hanoi wanted Cambodia as a satellite. Itsaim was to dominate Cambodia, reopen its southern supply route and demoralise South Vietnam by creating the impression that its ultimate overlordship of Indochina was inevitable. China, on the other hand, was above all interested in an independent Cambodia, Peking did not wish to see Phnom Penh as a satellite of Hanoi. It preferred independent states in Southeast Asia, not a region dominated by North Vietnam with its historic enmity of China and dependence on Moscow. This interest happened to coincide with ours, it was also imperative for the survival of South Vietnam.

Henry Kissinger *

'As to the question of peace in Laos and Cambodia, it falls within the competence and the sovereignty of the peoples of Laos and Cambodia. As to the international guarantee conference, its aim is to guarantee peace in Vietnam, and not for Indochina.'

Le Duc Tho**

* Henry Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, (London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1982); p.17.

** The New York Times, 25 January 1973.

Kissinger recognised that the failure of the Paris Agreement to include a ceasefire in Cambodia was clearly 'one of its tragedies'.[67] His rationale for making peace in Vietnam in the absence of formal arrangements for Cambodia was based on two principles : One, that Congress would not tolerate any delay in the execution of the accord on account of Cambodia alone; Two, that the Khmer Rouge might not be able to prevail by themselves. He had a 'firm expectation' on 24 January 1973 that the Vietnam ceasefire would be extended shortly to a de facto halt to the fighting in Cambodia.[68]

Kissinger had previously warned that any subsequent failure on the part of the Khmer Rouge to observe the ceasefire would mean the continuation of military activities in Cambodia. Before the Paris Agreement was initialled he had informed Le Duc Tho that

'... pending a settlement in Cambodia, (if) offensive military activities are taken there which would jeopardise the existing situation, such operations would be contrary to the spirit of Article 20 (b) of the Agreement and to the assumptions on which the Agreement is based.'[69]

An indivisible conflict, according to Kissinger, required an indivisible peace. Cambodia was part of Vietnam's war since the 'enemy' moved freely across the border in total defiance of the concept of sovereignty. Kissinger blamed Hanoi for spreading the war to Cambodia, calculating that its collapse would exacerbate the disintegration of South Vietnam.[70]

The Paris Accord implied the withdrawal of all foreign troops and the closing of foreign bases not only in South Vietnam but also in Cambodia and Laos (Ch.VII:Article 20). Its military provisions included a ban on the use of Cambodian base areas by 'foreign countries' to encroach on the sovereignty and security of South Vietnam. The goal ideally was to have a ceasefire in Cambodia and Laos at the same time as Vietnam.

Despite this provision, Article 20's references were vague. There was no deadline set for the withdrawal of 'foreign troops' from Cambodia and Laos and no enforcement machinery to guarantee or supervise the withdrawal. Only the signatories of the Agreement - the three Vietnamese parties and the US - were bound by this to end all military operations there. Once the war was over in Vietnam, Le Duc Tho assured Kissinger that there was 'no reason' for it to continue in Cambodia. Tho made 'no formal commitment' however other than 'a private understanding' that Hanoi would 'contribute actively' to restore peace there.[71]

The Khmer Rouge thought otherwise. The Vietnamese, they believed, were intent on perpetuating a situation to secure Khmer Rouge dependence. Hanoi had taken measures to ensure that its Cambodian installations were constantly augmented to reach a point when it would be unnecessary to supply them from Vietnam.[72]

The need to end the war in Cambodia had in fact been discussed. Secret talks held intermittently between the Vietnam Workers Party (VWP) and the Khmer Rouge representing the Communist Party of

Kampuchea (CPK) had grown in intensity with the onset in Paris of regular secret consultations on Vietnam. Particularly from 1972 onwards when the Paris talks showed signs of becoming conclusive, the presence of Pham Hung, Secretary of the Central Office, South Vietnam (COSVN) suggested an element of urgency.[73] Vietnamese negotiations with the Khmer Rouge for a ceasefire were now critical. Pham Hung recognised that North Vietnam could not indefinitely sustain the burden of war which it had endured for thirty years. The North Vietnamese, according to the CPKwere interested in US offers of aid amounting to 'more than US$3 million'.[74]

Immediately prior to the Paris Agreement's signature, friction between the North Vietnamese and Khmer Rouge representatives was particularly acute. In the critical period from 24 to 26 January 1973 when the definitive terms of the Agreement had been reached, Pham Hung warned Pol Pot, General Secretary of the CPK that Kissinger had specifically informed Le Duc Tho that should the Khmer Rouge continue to refuse to accept a ceasefire, US strategic and tactical planes would destroy Cambodia 'within 72 hours'.[75] This was affirmed on Pol Pot's return to the maquis by a letter from COSVN disclosing Kissinger's threats.[76]

These threats did not impress Pol Pot who expected Cambodia's revolution to achieve nothing from the Paris Agreement, as had been the case with the Geneva Accord of 1954.[77] As Pol Pot's forces would continue to fight until 'total victory', Pham Hung threatened to leave intact the entire Vietnamese military machinery in Cambodia a point later corroborated by Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the depos-

ed leader of Cambodia.[78] Hanoi simultaneously began to strengthen its system of military occupation by upgrading its bases.[79]

Prepared to go it alone, the Khmer Rouge condemned Hanoi's signature of the Agreement on 28 January 1973 as a betrayal of the Indochinese revolution.[80] They reaffirmed the Five-Point declaration of 23 March 1970 which demanded inter alia, the total withdrawal from Cambodia of all military personnel, advisors and material of the US 'and its satellites', an end to the acts of aggression against Cambodia and the termination of all US support and aid to the Lon Nol regime.[81]

The resolution of the Cambodian problem as Kissinger saw it, necessitated a negotiated settlement. This would ideally involve the Chinese as intermediary whom he believed had greater leverage than Hanoi over the Khmer Rouge. The resolution of the Cambodian question along these lines was first discussed in New York in November 1972 when Kissinger met Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister, Qiao Guanhua.[82] The meeting revealed what Kissinger called the 'congruence' of Washington and Peking's interests in their mutual desire for a 'neutral independent Cambodia' free from foreign interference. The possibility was also broached of Sihanouk playing a significant role on the assumption that he would not act as a 'frontman' for the Khmer Rouge. According to Kissinger, Qiao's response indicated that Peking was agreeable to the idea of Kissinger meeting with the Prince on his 'next visit' to Peking, then scheduled for January 1973.[83]

Kissinger continued therefore to believe Cambodia represented a 'convergence' of Peking and Washington's interests. To China the central dilemma was the preservation of Cambodia as a separate state; to the US Cambodia's collapse might spell the complete dismantling of the structure of peace in Indochina.[84] The problem was to create a different but viable government apparatus that might act as a guarantee of Cambodian independence and neutrality to assure its survival in essentially the same form. This idea could concurrently support the continued existence of a separate and independent South Vietnam which would also be in both the US' and China's interests.

A genuine solution for Cambodia, Kissinger believed, required a ceasefire and Sihanouk's return which needed a 'balance of forces'.[85] The continuation of war in Cambodia meant maintaining the existing situation there. An 'understanding' might be reached with Lon Nol that did some justice to the concerns of the prince. Two parties would be left to be balanced - Lon Nol's forces and those of the Khmer Rouge. This balancing act might also lead to the 'preservation' of Cambodia to prevent it from becoming an appendage to Hanoi.

The US position on Cambodia was thus reinforced. On 28 January 1973, the day the truce came into effect in Vietnam, Marshal Lon Nol declared a unilateral halt of offensive operations in Cambodia. Kissinger had said the bombing on Cambodia would be resumed only if the Khmer Rouge insisted on continued hostilities and 'only at the request' of the Lon Nol government.[86] On

5 February the US was reported to have assured Lon Nol that bombing in Cambodia would be resumed if Hanoi resumed 'offensive operations' against his forces.[87] This assurance had been delivered in mid-January, prior to the signature of the accord, to Lon Nol in Phnom Penh by the US Chief of Staff, Alexander Haig, Jr.,. The developments in the Paris talks between Le Duc Tho and Kissinger as well as the probable contents of the Agreement were also made known to Lon Nol. The same assurance was conveyed in Paris by Assistant Secretary of State, William Sullivan to the Cambodian Foreign Minister, Long Boret. Cambodian officials in Phnom Penh were also assured that the US had reached an 'unwritten understanding' with Hanoi that the North Vietnamese troops would be withdrawn from Cambodia. This was perhaps a reminder of the 'private understanding' Kissinger said he had with Le Duc Tho, mentioned earlier (p.59).

Steps were being taken however to assure Lon Nol of con -tinued military and economic support. In the interim a controversy had broken out in Washington in early February over whether the recently-concluded Paris Agreement allowed the US to continue furnishing military aid to Cambodia and Laos. The Defence Department was reported on 2 February to have been urged by the State Department and apparently by the White House office of Kissinger to continue such aid and 'not to withdraw' military aid personnel stationed there.[88] There were those in the Pentagon who had questioned whether the continuation of such aid was allowed under the accord.

The Defence Department's response was that 'in the absence of formal ceasefire agreements' in Cambodia and Laos such assistance was continuing 'without fundamental change'.

On 7 February Kissinger left Washington for Bangkok, Hanoi and Peking. A possible difference of nuance on the Cambodian problem might be detected at this point between the White House and the State Department. In Bangkok Kissinger's discussions on 8 February with the US Ambassador in Cambodia, Emory Swank, revealed that the latter took a harder line on Sihanouk and thought him 'irrelevant'. Like Lon Nol, Swank preferred negotiations on Cambodia through Hanoi. Kissinger preferred Peking, the 'better intermediary'. Swank however also wanted an assurance from Kissinger that neither himself nor any of his associates would meet the prince while in Peking.[89]

By this time the ceasefire which was supposed to end the war and limit the conflict on the ground in South Vietnam was already being tested. The fighting showed signs of laying the foundations for an extended war engulfing Cambodia. Swank and Kissinger also disagreed on the utility of military operations to bring about the ceasefire there. Swank informed Kissinger that 42,000 North Vietnamese troops remained in Cambodia, 35,000 of which serviced Hanoi's supply system for South Vietnam.[90] The Ambassador thought a ceasefire was 'more probable' with a minimum of military pressure while Kissinger believed in its absolute necessity. Kissinger later attributed the

resumption of bombing in Cambodia in February to a renewed Khmer Rouge offensive.[91] His purpose was to create a 'balance of forces' that would deprive the communists' hope for a military solution and thus force a compromise.

This action takes on an interesting dimension when seen against one disclosure on 9 February.[92] Sources in the Nixon Administration revealed that the US and North Vietnam had 'secretly' agreed in their Paris negotiations in January that a ban on 'foreign military activity' in Cambodia and Laos would not take effect immediately. Kissinger and Le Duc Tho were said to have entered into an 'explicit oral agreement' in which the US and the DRV would cease military actions in Cambodia and Laos only when 'the principals in the civil wars' in the two countries had agreed to a ceasefire.The two men had apparently agreed on the interpretation of the term 'foreign military activity'; which provided for a cessation of all American air raids and for a withdrawal of the 50,000 to 60,000 North Vietnamese troops believed then to be in Laos. It explained why the text of Article 20 made no reference whatsoever to when 'all military actions' by foreign countries in Cambodia and Laos should be 'put to an end.' This was apparently intentional.

Such a secret agreement might explain the violations of Article 20 by both sides, following the accord's signature. Already US warplanes had attacked communist forces in Cambodia for the first time since Lon Nol's unilateral declaration of the truce. It would seem therefore that the US might be at liberty

to stage such raids until a ceasefire was observed by both sides in Cambodia. It is significant that on 9 February just as Kissinger was about to arrive in Hanoi, the bombing of Cambodia grew in intensity.

Kissinger's conversations with Pham Van Dong and Le Duc Tho in Hanoi (10-13 February) made little headway towards the withdrawal of its troops in Cambodia. After the ceasefire Hanoi took the position that withdrawal from Cambodia and Laos would have to await two conditions : a ceasefire in Cambodia and Laos and a political settlement in both countries. The Phnom Penh regime had to be dismantled before any negotiations could begin and a political settlement could only come about with a new government. Only then would Hanoi contemplate withdrawal.

But the form of political settlement in Cambodia was open to debate. The Americans were predisposed towards a 'genuine coalition government', with Sihanouk at the centre, the North Vietnamese thought the prince's role disposable en route to a communist government. Tho also warned Kissinger that the 'decisive element' in Cambodia was not Hanoi but the Khmer Rouge.[93]

These differences on Cambodia were not confined to the US and North Vietnam. The widening gap between Peking and Hanoi's aspirations there was made clear in mid-February to Kissinger. Both officially supported the communist insurgency led by the prince. As opposed to Hanoi, Peking gave Sihanouk

full support. In Peking (15-19 February) Kissinger thought Premier Zhou Enlai seemed more in favour of a structure that would best guarantee Cambodian independence and neutrality than of a Khmer Rouge victory.[94] Peking did not insist on the overthrow of the Lon Nol regime, on whose survival Sihanouk's balancing act depended. A complete communisation of Cambodia, Zhou suggested, would only accentuate China and South Vietnam's security problems and perhaps eventually place Indochina under Hanoi's tutelage.

A 'practical arrangement' involving Lon Nol's forces without Lon Nol thus emerged between the US and China. If these forces could survive a settlement and their existence be temporarily guaranteed, Sihanouk might return in a definite role as arbiter between Lon Nol and the Khmer Rouge. Kissinger even suggested an 'immediate meeting' between a representative of Lon Nol and Penn Nouth, premier of the prince's exiled Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia (GRUNK) based in Peking to negotiate a 'coalition structure'.[95] So long as his forces were represented, Lon Nol need not himself be part of this government.

Zhou cautioned that the civil war in Cambodia was complex and involved 'outside forces'. But he would nevertheless convey these ideasto Sihanouk. To Kissinger this meant Zhou identified himself partly with the process, and that Peking was 'approaching an active role' in the Cambodian peace negotiations.[96]

But possibly unknown to Kissinger, while he was in Hanoi, the search for an alternative solution to Cambodia had begun. On 10

February GRUNK's emissary in Peking, Sarin Chhak approached the French Ambassador to China, Etienne Manac'h, to ask if the Élysée had finally decided to 'modify its policies' on Cambodia.[97] Manac'h was responsive and arranged to see Qiao Guanhua, Deputy Foreign Minister, with whom Kissinger believed he had reached a 'convergence of views' on Cambodia. Contrary to this observation, Qiao expressed his doubts about the situation in Cambodia, the US he thought were in an impasse there.

Kissinger's refusal to meet Sihanouk in Peking also did not augur well. The prince had in fact made known to Kissinger through Le Duc Tho and Zhou that he was ready to meet him.[98] On his own account, the Prince indicated a 'readiness' on 28 January 1973 for 'indirect talks' with the US. If Washington was prepared to act in a 'friendly manner' with an independent and non-aligned Cambodia, a 'rapid reconciliation' might be achieved.[99] Moderation had been urged by Premier Zhou Enlai who assured the prince of Peking's support 'to the end' if his forces appeared conciliatory.[100] Two agreements had already been signed between Peking and GRUNK on 13 January for the 'gratuitous supply' of military and economic aid for 1973.[101] On 29 January Sihanouk said that GRUNK was ready to welcome Kissinger and that negotiations might be held in Paris, Ottawa or 'another centre' but must not include Lon Nol.[102]

Conciliation was also evident in Sihanouk's statement in Peking on 29 January when he disclosed that under an evolving new policy, the Khmer Rouge would not launch offensive

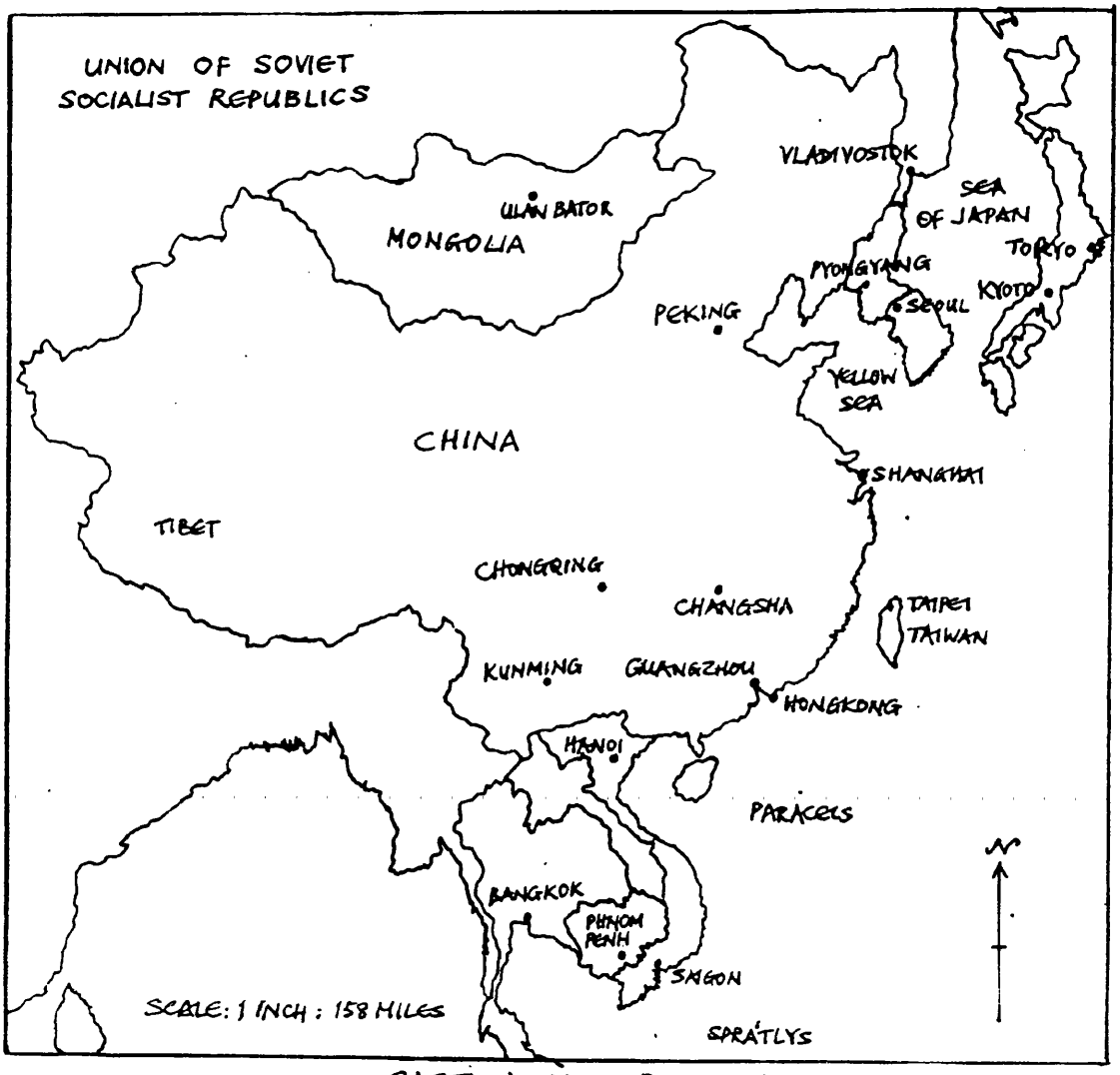
actions.[103] The final word on this policy of reevaluation had not as yet been received from the interior. Khieu Samphan, Deputy Premier and Minister of National Defence, however had already approved his offer of 'good relations' with the US. We now know that the Prince had also asked the leaders of the resistance for permission to enter the 'liberated zone' of Cambodia. Although Sihanouk on 6 February denied that he was scheduled to meet Kissinger in Hanoi during the latter's visit, he again reiterated his readiness to meet him 'anywhere and at anytime'.[104]

Kissinger's lack of response to Sihanouk's overtures was interpreted by Penn Nouth as a 'grave error' to have serious repercussions afterwards. As he later explained to Manac'h on 3 March, agreement to a meeting had been a great concession on GRUNK's part.[105] These remarks were also disclosed to William Sullivan, then in Paris for the International Conference on Vietnam, who confirmed that Washington did not intend to make contact with Sihanouk.

The US' consistent refusal to make contact had ominous overtones. All GRUNK resolutions, whether from Peking or elsewhere had to have the approval of the interior whose influence was growing by the day. In the spring of 1973 the Khmer Rouge outlined two alternatives : total victory or compromise.[106] The actual choice between these would depend on the evolving military situation on the ground. The Khmer

Rouge would be forced to negotiate - for the best conditions possible - only if military victory remained elusive. The reverse was also true.

On his return from his visits to Bangkok, Vientiane, Hanoi, Peking and Tokyo, Kissinger's reaction was to call a series of meetings in late February with the WSAG (Washington Special Actions Group). The Cambodian situation was analysed in a memorandum of 27 February 1973 which outlined 'two mutually dependent objectives': One, to strengthen the Lon Nol regime in Phnom Penh and Two, to achieve a ceasefire there.[107] Reluctant to repeat the Vietnamese and Laotian experiences in Cambodia, Kissinger said the US kept a 'deliberately low profile'. Although the Phnom Penh government was being supplied with military and economic aid, Congressional constraints meant funds and personnel were limited. This was a situation that was to plague the Administration throughout the next two years.



EAST ASIA : POLITICAL
1973

SOURCE:
THE READER'S DIGEST
GREAT WORLD ATLAS,
(LONDON, 1962).

I : IV

THE EAST ASIAN PERSPECTIVE

'In the course of these last months, a certain convergence of views is being formed between Washington, Peking and Tokyo on the future of Asia: it is expressed in the Shanghai Communique and in the declaration of Tanaka and of the Premier of the People's Republic of China ..... Chinese diplomacy strives to channel to its own advantage the ebb; it seeks besides to establish a new equilibrium which may be able to favour in the longterm the chances of a more autonomous Asia, more independent in its decisions.'

Etienne Manac'h

13 February 1973*

'...the new current in Asia is moving forward by a big step towards the dissolving of confrontation by blocs, and towards peaceful coexistence, transcending differences in social systems. This current can now be called the 'spirit of the Paris Agreement.'

Mainichi Shimbun

16 February 1973

* Etienne Manac'h, Mémoires d'Extrême Asie : Une Terre traversée de Puissances Invisibles, (Paris, Fayard, 1983); p.328.

From a larger East Asian perspective, the ending of the war in Vietnam might help to force the pace to consolidate peace in Asia. A new framework of relations entailing the cooperation of China and Japan showed signs of emerging from the hoped for reduction of international tensions. The intentions of China and Japan to promote stability in Indochina for that purpose must now be explored.

In Asia, Japan had special significance for Zhou Enlai. Japan's sense of 'isolation' from major international developments possibly accounted for its speed in establishing diplomatic relations with China in September 1972. This was a consequence of the 'shock' in Tokyo when it was suddenly informed of the change in America's China policy in July 1971 and of the Nixon visit to Peking in February 1972.[108] An informal tacit understanding had since grown up between the two capitals in the Japan-China dialogue, and already speculation had arisen about the consequences of a combination of Japanese industrial might and Chinese manpower.

Zhou saw Japan's 'future orientation' as at a crossroads, involving a separation of politics and economics. In Asia, Japan planned to expand economically in Southeast Asia including postwar Vietnam.[109] A capitalist nation, Japan could not help 'seeking profits from loans or investments' offered to Southeast Asian countries.' The 'biggest focal

point' in the Asian situation after the normalisation of Sino-Japanese relations in September 1972 according to Zhou was the 'ending of the Vietnam War', to mark the beginning of the easing of tension in Asia as a whole.[110]

Under these circumstances Zhou gave emphasis in mid-January 1973 to the nurturing of a China-Japan 'detente'. In a meeting with Kimura Takeo, member of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) on 18 January, the Chinese Premier said the onset of the Vietnam 'peace' raised for both China and Japan the critical question of the Soviet Union's ambitions. Zhou was aware that Japan's small defence expenditure might prove inadequate to ward off Moscow's military might.[111] For China however any increment in the former could revive the spectre of Japanese militarism.

Heading the first official Japanese mission to visit China after the normalisation of relations, was Nakasone Yasuhiro, Minister of International Trade and Industry (MITI). His talks (17-22 January) with Zhou discussed the implicit agreement by China and Japan not to seek 'hegemony' in the Asia-Pacific and the eventual conclusion of a Japan-China 'Non-Aggression' pact.[112]

Economic issues were prominent including the conclusion of a Trade Agreement, the use of funds for the Export-Import Bank of Japan and the establishment of a Japan-China Trade Council. The first of the agreements expected to be signed was the Civil Aviation Agreement on the basis of the Septem-

ber 1972 Joint Communique. The Zhou-Nakasone dialogue also saw a tacit agreement by China and Japan 'not to compete' in their respective assistance to developing countries. China's emphasis in the Third World would concentrate on agriculture and light industry while Japanese assistance might take the form of heavy industry.[113] The possibility of joint exploitation of oil resources on the Chinese continental shelf by Japanese petroleum refining industry circles was deemed inappropriate for the time being.

Zhou and Nakasone also discussed the 'Vietnam peace' in the context of a larger 'Asian peace'. After the ceasefire, China and Japan would 'cooperate mutually' and extend economic aid in an effort to realise peace there.[114] During Nakasone's Peking visit, Tokyo made corresponding moves towards Hanoi. Reports from Jakarta on 18 January 1973 suggested that Japan was planning to open diplomatic negotiations with Hanoi after the ceasefire.[115] Yoshida Kenzo, Director-General of the Japanese Foreign Ministry's Asian Affairs Bureau revealed that these negotiations would begin shortly when a reconstruction programme for postwar Vietnam was expected to be developed.

Japan had no intention however of increasing its contacts with Hanoi to the detriment of Saigon. MITI was conspicuous in sending a mission led by its Divisional Director, Ishii Kengo, to Saigon on 25-26 January to discuss for the first time, economic aid 'on a governmental basis' between Japan and South Vietnam.[116] The momentum generated by this visit was to create 'at every oppor-

tunity' for MITI, a chain of aid activities including relief for war victims, rehabilitation of war damage and economic development.

Japan's initiatives towards Vietnam might be explained in terms of important pronouncements made in Tokyo. At the time of the initialling of the Paris Agreement on 24 January 1973 Premier Tanaka Kakuei was emphatic that Japan's role in post -war Vietnam and its international responsibilities should be enlarged. The Japanese Government was expected to map out plans for 'an active part' in the rehabilitation of Indochina and was ready to extend yen credits, 'gratuitous loans' and other types of economic aid on a 'bilateral basis'.[117] Welcoming the Agreement, Foreign Minister Ohira Masayoshi called for an international conference to preserve 'peace and stability' in Indochina. He believed a 'substantially effective' international effort for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Indochina needed Japan's participation in 'full consultation' with the US and other major nations.[118]

Ohira's statement may have reflected continued Japanese irritation over what was considered the Nixon Administration's failure to consult fully on key issues with Japan, its major ally in Asia. The White House had apparently not kept Tokyo informed about the Paris talks. Nor had Japan been invited to the proposed international conference on Vietnam in which other major nations were scheduled to participate. Yet Japan, it appeared, was expected to finance a large part of the reconstruction effort in Indochina. In this connection Kissinger later explained that the participants of

the conference were selected by agreement among the parties that negotiated the settlement. Although there was no objection to Japan's participation, 'unanimity' about its membership in the conference could not be achieved.[119]

In Japan, opportunities the Vietnam 'peace' might offer for postwar economic rehabilitation assistance generated widespread interest. The Keidanren (Federation of Economic Organisations) hoped to create a 'Committee for Cooperation with Indochina'.[120] It would shortly send Senga Tetsuya, on its Board of Directors on unofficial visits to North and South Vietnam. The Keizai Doyukai (Japan Committee for Economic Development) suggested a big business conference of Southeast Asian nations including North and South Vietnam be convened to discuss Indochina's postwar reconstruction.[121]

Particularly significant was the Japan-Vietnam Trade Association's statement of 27 January 1973 encouraging the Tokyo Government to 'correct' its diplomatic and trade policies with Hanoi.[122] It invoked as its basis the 'Trade Consultations Memorandum' signed in 1966 with its Hanoi counterpart, the DRV Chamber of Commerce, which had built on previous private trade agreements concluded in 1956 and 1958. This was reminiscent of a similar strategy between China and Japan in the late 1950's and early 1960's which culminated in a 1962 Trade Memorandum negotiated between Liao Chengzhi, member of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and Takasaki Tatsunosuke, a Japanese business-

man with prewar Chinese connections who later became a member of the LDP. 'Liao-Takasaki Trade' or 'L-T Trade' subsequently emerged to become an important channel for Peking and Tokyo to promote quasi-governmental relations.[123]

Stressing the parallels, the Japan-Vietnam Trade Association's statement encouraged the conclusion of a 'private trade agreement' or 'Trade Memorandum' and the setting up of joint trade missions in Tokyo and Hanoi aimed at longterm and stable expansion of trade. An informal Japanese delegation for Hanoi was urged as a preliminary move. A 'revision' of Japan's diplomatic and foreign policies, the normalisation of relations with the DRV and economic exchange between the two Vietnamese states were also suggested.

Indochina reconstruction aid was also mentioned in the Premier's Administrative speech of 27 January 1973 in which Japan might fulfil a role in the stabilisation of welfare, economic construction and development of Vietnam. Tanaka again proposed the convening of an international conference of Asia-Pacific nations.[124] Tokyo's enthusiasm was evident in Ohira's 30 January statement when he suggested that reconstruction aid need not await the 60-day interval for complete US withdrawal and might be extended throughout that period.

Three stages were outlined for the implementation of such aid: One, emergency aid to war victims, in which Yen 1 Billion had been appropriated for fiscal 1973; Two, the creation of an 'Exchange Stabilisation Fund' to maintain 'internal economic balance' between North and South Vietnam; Three, a fully-fledged recon-

struction and development plan.[125] Japan would be fully responsible for the first stage. On account of their scope the second and third stages would require international cooperation. However Japan would play a considerable role in the allocation of resources. Tokyo's support for the protocols and the conditions of the accord was accompanied by its insistence that 'all Vietnamese parties' adhere to and implement its provisions.

An unprecedented statement accompanied the euphoria surrounding the Vietnam peace. On 30 January Ohira also revealed that Japan had in fact maintained 'unofficial contact' with the North Vietnamese government since February 1972. A secret trip to Hanoi for an unofficial exchange of views had been made then by Miyake Wasuke, First Divisional Director of the Foreign Ministry's Southeast Asian section.[126] The timing of Miyake's visit had been significant coming at the height of the US-China rapprochement symbolised by Nixon's Peking visit. The delicacy of similar contacts after 1973 was to receive additional emphasis since they would require Ohira's personal approval. Preliminary contacts however were likely to be made through Paris which had been instrumental in the initial success of Miyake's hitherto secret mission. Contacts were now described as a 'prior condition' to assess Japan's role in the postwar reconstruction of Vietnam, an exchange of views on economic assistance and Tokyo's recognition of the Hanoi government.[127]

During the first week of February 1973 Japan appeared to be coordinating its moves towards North Vietnam with those of the US. It awaited the consequences of Kissinger's proposed visits to Hanoi and Peking before making a formal decision. A Foreign Ministry source divulged on 1 February that a decision had in fact been taken to dispatch officials to Hanoi 'as early as 20 February 1973'.[128] This would be one day after Kissinger's scheduled departure from Peking. As prescribed in Ohira's plan, three officials including Miyake himself to discuss emergency aid in Hanoi would also sound out possible Japanese recognition of North Vietnam along the following principles: One, the DRV's evaluation of relations between Japan and South Vietnam; Two, the RVN's reaction to Japan's contacts with the North; Three, the pace at which normalisation of relations between the US and the DRV was likely to proceed in the future; Four, the coexistence of the two Vietnams as separate entities in the shaping of peace in Indochina.[129]

Japan's forays into North Vietnam were not without obstacles. The beginning of a long and unresolved controversy concerning the PRG's status, would plague the Tokyo government in coming months. In anticipation, Ohira emphasised on 2 February that Japan would continue to maintain diplomatic relations with the Saigon government while recognising that an 'administration' existed in the North. Tokyo had no intention of contacting the 'liberation forces' in the South although it could not be denied that they existed.[130] Ohira conceded the

following day however that a situation existed in Vietnam where the rule of the South Vietnamese government might be 'limited'.[131] The Paris Agreement called into question the legitimacy of the Saigon Administration's claim to represent Vietnam as 'sole government'. The accord's tacit legitimation of the PRG's presence in the South suggested moreover that the Thieu administration was not the 'only authority' there.

Any establishment of Japanese diplomatic relations with North Vietnam would also raise the critical issue of 'reparations'. This was compounded by the fact that Tokyo had recognised the 'State of Vietnam' as the legitimate government of Vietnam by the San Francisco Treaty of 1952. Relations were established in 1953 and the conclusion of a reparations treaty was followed by a general normalisation of relations with South Vietnam in 1959.

Japan's quandary was made more complex on 6 February. A public statement then by Hoang Tung, Editor of the Hanoi daily, Nhan Dan, said Hanoi wished to establish 'normal relations' with Japan, to which Saigon's relations posed no barrier.[132] Hanoi's attitude was 'flexible and realistic' and Japan's cooperation with the US during the war was no impediment. Tung's statement, made before Kissinger's Hanoi visit fitted with the gradual shift in Japan's own approach to the question of recognising the DRV.

Tokyo remained cautious. Concern for the 'full implementation' of the protocols of the Paris Agreement was again

expressed on 8 February. Chief Cabinet Secretary Nikaido Susumu said Tokyo would sound out the DRV and 'other countries concerned' about Japan's possible recognition of Hanoi. A form of 'de facto' recognition might be considered since the Agreement called for the future reunification of North and South Vietnam. Japan would also examine the USA's moves including the results of Kissinger's forthcoming visit to Hanoi before dispatching the Miyake mission.[133]

Saigon's disclosure on the eve of Kissinger's Hanoi visit that it was not opposed in principle to Tokyo's normalisation of relations with Hanoi eased the way for further formulation of policy.[134] We now know that the idea of American economic aid to the North was acceptable to Saigon if Hanoi did not attack the South.[135] Private level contacts were gaining ground at the same time. The visit to Saigon, Phnom Penh and Vientiane of the Keidanren mission led by Senga Tetsuya would start on 12 February to explore the extension of economic assistance to Indochina.[136]

On a broader level the idea of the Asia-Pacific conference was also gathering momentum. Ohira suggested on 6 February that the proposal be first discussed with UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim who was scheduled to visit Tokyo on 15 February and then at an 'emergency conference' of Japanese ambassadors to Southeast Asia to be held in Bangkok on 17-18 February which was an occasion to study trends in the post-Vietnam situation and to gauge the reactions of neighbouring countries to the 'peace'.[137]

That meeting coincided with Kissinger's presence in China. He believed it essential that the US and China became part of the 'structure of peace' advocated by President Nixon. The role of the US was to 'share responsibilities' in creative partnerships with its friends - as expressed by the normalisation of relations with China - and to move from 'confrontation to negotiation' with its opponents.[138]

Kissinger's Peking visit (15-19 February) affirmed the 'continuation of possibilities' in this respect, outlined in the Shanghai Communique of February 1972.[139] The two sides agreed that it was appropriate to accelerate the normalisation of relations since existing channels in Paris were proving inadequate. Each side would establish a liaison office in the capital of the other to handle trade and all matters apart from strictly formal diplomatic aspects of the relationship.[140] As a gesture of goodwill the Chinese agreed to the release of the two US military prisoners held since 1965 and 1967 within the same period as that of the US withdrawal from Vietnam.

Kissinger recognised that Zhou Enlai's preoccupation with the Soviet threat remained undiminished with regard to the 'current world situation' and future policies in Southeast Asia.[141] Zhou warned that if the Soviet Union succeeded in subjugating Peking, the impact on the world equilibrium of forces could 'reverberate' by producing major aggression in Asia. It was in their aversion to this possibility, as expressed in Vietnam, that Chinese and American interests appeared

almost parallel: the containment of Soviet power, Kissinger concluded, emerged a dominant aim.

One of the principal purposes of the US-China rapproche-ment was to terminate the war in Vietnam. American retreat from Vietnam should not lead to gains for some other power in Indochina. As we have seen, Peking hoped the US disengagement from Asia would guarantee a degree of independence to every state and preferred four states in Indochina rather than one entity dominated by Hanoi.[142] Four states implied four separate revolutions and four independent paths to socialism. In Kissinger's talks with Zhou, the Premier did not press for the overthrow of the Thieu regime as opposed to Hanoi's insistence that he be removed.[143] The Chinese were particularly anxious to ensure that competition for the reconstruction of Indochina, especially North Vietnam would not encourage participation by the Soviet Union in any form.[144] If Moscow had any influence there Peking might face difficulties in helping its Indochinese neighbours reconstruct.

One feature of Kissinger's Peking visit deserves emphasis. In the 19 months since his first visit in July 1971, Kissinger noticed that Zhou Enlai had staged a complete 'volte face' with respect to Japan.[145] China now treated Japan as an incipient ally. Mao Zedong even advised Kissinger that he should never visit Peking without also stopping over in Tokyo. Although Zhou still entertained fears of Japanese militarism in mid-February 1973, the 'closest cooperation' between the US and Japan was urged.

He suggested moreover that the US take the initiative in the creation of an anti-Soviet coalition stretching from Japan, through China, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey and western Europe.[146]

Japan's prominence in the emerging US-China-Japan dialogue with special emphasis on Vietnam was gaining momentum. A statement on 15 February in Tokyo and Washington simultaneously announced that Kissinger would proceed directly to Japan after leaving Peking on 19 February.[147] The White House had apparently insisted as late as 13 February that a visit to Tokyo was 'not scheduled'.[148] It was subsequently revealed that talks with Tanaka and Ohira were proposed 'all of a sudden' by the US side on 14 February - while Kissinger was in Hongkong - on direct instructions from Nixon.[149] Both Washington and Tokyo could have been awaiting the outcome of Kissinger's dialogue with Hanoi before deciding whether a Japanese visit was necessary. Only Ohira, we are later informed, had been aware of the possibility of Kissinger visiting Tokyo.[150] (Kissinger had previously visited the Japanese capital in June and in August 1972.)

In the American context Kissinger's Tokyo visit was understood to have implications for US aid to Indochina. On 7 February President Nixon in Washington submitted to the Senate the draft of new foreign assistance authorisations for Fiscal 73. A Congressional hearing on 8 February had expressed concern about the future US role in Southeast Asia, particularly with reference to the rehabilitation of Vietnam.[151] Reconstruction aid on a bilateral basis - from the US to Indochina - was expected

to meet domestic American opposition. Secretary of State William Rogers proposed that this be balanced by an international 'consortium' including the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and other multilateral organisations. An international effort for Indochina's reconstruction and rehabilitation would invite North Vietnam's active participation and was a possible contribution to the 'investment in peace'. It was assumed Hanoi might be prepared to accept UN participation and assistance on longterm projects from the US or the World Bank (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, IBRD).

Although North Vietnam was not a member of the World Bank, the latter's Vice-President for Asia, Peter Cargill, was reported on 10 February to have said the Bank would be willing to play a role in Indochina including making a financial contribution.[152] The Bank was not taking the lead however but was anticipating 'more information' from the US and other potential donors. One possibility was the Bank becoming chairman of an aid consortium similar to those already existing for India, Pakistan, Colombia and Indonesia.

During the hearing Rogers also alluded to 'interested parties' which had a stake in the development of events in Southeast Asia contributing to such a consortium arrangement. The International Conference on Vietnam (Article 19) was also aimed at developing the momentum towards an international cooperative effort. Japan, Rogers added, would have a major role to play if a consortium was set up to assist in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Indochina.[153]

At a press conference on the day Kissinger's Tokyo visit was announced, Rogers said that Japan's interest in cooperating in the reconstruction of Indochina was 'very much welcomed' by the US.[154] The small investment that Congress would be called upon to make would provide 'cement' for the Agreement's 'certain obligations' towards Indochina reconstruction. Kissinger later complimented Japan for its 'responsible role' in Southeast Asia as a 'natural exercise' of its respect for stability in Asia. The US, he added, did not consider itself a competitor with Japan for the privilege of extending aid there.[155]

It was suggested at the time that Kissinger's Tokyo visit was intended to explain the discrepancies between the Indochina aid formulae advocated by Washington and Tokyo. Press speculation suggested his consultations with Tanaka and Ohira on 19 February 1973 centred on the contents of his talks in Hanoi and Peking. Kissinger was said to have requested a 'large-scale burden' from Japan for the postwar reconstruction of Indochina.[156] The possible recommendations of the US-DRV JEC, prospects for US recognition of Hanoi and US-China relations were also discussed at great length.

Whatever its effects, a more cautious approach towards Tokyo's role in Indochina emerged after Kissinger's departure on 20 February. It was announced on 21 February that Miyake Wasuke's Hanoi visit, which had been earlier proposed

for 20 February, would now be deferred. The US Ambassador to Japan, Robert Ingersoll, had apparently advised Ohira to postpone Miyake's visit until after the results of Kissinger's visit were clear.[157]

Contrary to Ohira's original intentions Tokyo decided to await the end of the 60-day US withdrawal from Vietnam before making any definite moves in Indochina. Japan's plans to draw up any aid programme there would now depend on Miyake's deferred mission. Tanaka's suggestion for an Asia-Pacific conference was also temporarily shelved, the stated reason being that the conference of Japan's Southeast Asian ambassadors in Bangkok (17-18 February) had failed to achieve consensus on this idea.

In Washington open debate on the merits of US reconstruction assistance was simultaneously taking place. On 20 February Senators of both the Republican and Democratic parties urged the debate be delayed until after the US withdrawal from Indochina lest the latter be jeopardised. A possible Congressional conflict over the Indochina aid issue might also emerge from the amendments that Senator Edward Kennedy (Democrat, Massachusetts) had introduced the same day to a pending military assistance bill.[158] The amendments would authorise an 'initial humanitarian contribution' of US$72 million to war victims in South Vietnam and Cambodia and would stipulate that the funds be channelled through international organisations and private relief agencies.

A statement by William Rogers before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 21 February 1973 reiterated the US' commitment to a postwar programme of relief and rehabilitation for Indochina as an 'excellent investment in peace'.[159] He reaffirmed his belief in the major international consortium effort which would require 'full consultations' with 'other nations' - for instance, Japan. Kissinger's visit to Asia, he added, had been aimed at persuading all countries, particularly North Vietnam, to support the concept of foreign assistance. No agreement was reached and no concrete results emerged from the discussions except for the creation of the JEC.

Planning for any programme of assistance remained tentative. Rogers ascribed this to the uncertainties prevailing on the ground concerning the implementation of the truce. Until the situation in Indochina as a whole was clarified, an outline for a proposed aid programme, including contributions from other nations, would be deferred. In any case Congress would be consulted and no commitment would be made without its support. No figure had been arrived at and full consideration would be given only after the 'most careful planning'.

Within a week, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved a bill that would withhold foreign aid funds after 30 April unless the Administration agreed to release US$4.5 billion in impounded money.[160] By the same token, the bill, also called a 'continuing appropriations resolution' would prohibit any aid to North Vietnam without specific Congressional approval.

By this time the International Conference on Vietnam had opened in Paris, lasting from 26 February to 2 March. Rogers said it represented an 'unprecedented opportunity' for the thirteen parties 'directly and indirectly' involved in the Vietnam war to make important contributions to a stable and durable peace' in Indochina.[161] 'Concerted and constructive international action,' he hoped would focus on 'reconciliation and concord' to achieve an international structure of peace in Vietnam to guarantee stability and security in Indochina.

During the conference Hanoi opposed mention in the declaration of postwar foreign aid except in general terms.It also issued repeated insistences that reconstruction aid be given directly rather than through an international body.Suspicious that an aid programme organised by several nations in concert or by an international agency might substantially reduce its leverage over it, the DRV said the US owed it aid that could not be diluted by an international contribution.[162] Hanoi was aware that political resistance in the US would make it harder to get an aid bill through Congress than if aid was channelled through an international framework. Specifically Hanoi demanded 'industrial aid' from the US to build up its own infrastructure.

In Paris as in Washington, Rogers responded that the exact scope of aid would depend on the findings of the JEC, the recommendations of the Administration and on Congress'

decisions. Private talks after the Conference, between William Sullivan, (Rogers' deputy) and Nguyen Co Thach (Vice-Foreign Minister of the DRV), would discuss economic aid including the functioning of the JEC. The Act of the Paris Conference pledged to assist and contribute to the 'relief, rehabilitation and reconstructive' effort in Indochina - the manner and extent of such contributions depending on the conference participants. Significantly Rogers reiterated that while it was clear that some participants may not have the ability to make any meaningful contribution, others 'not here represented' might wish to play a role in such an effort. Any contribution, must however be made in 'full consultation' with respect to the sovereignty of the recipients and be 'without any political considerations'.[163]

In Washington, Nixon attempted to assuage critics by stating on 2 March that aid to the countries of Indochina, if approved by Congress, would come out of funds of the Defence Agency or AID and not from the domestic side of the budget.[164] Funds for North Vietnam however would have to come at the expense of some other programme, possibly foreign aid payments to other countries, including South Vietnam as well as weapons procurement.

But the question of aid was very much dependent on the implementation of the Paris Agreement on the ground, which showed no signs of significant improvement after more than a month. The situation in South Vietnam in relation to the proposed framework for aid might now be examined.

TABLE I

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1973

USA	JAPAN	CHINA	NORTH VIETNAM	SOUTH VIETNAM
24 January 1973, Paris: Kissinger and Le Duc Tho initial Paris Agreement.	18 January, Jakarta; Japan's relations with North Vietnam after ceasefire reported.	15-22 January: Kimura Takeo in Peking.		
26 January: Washington: Kissinger visits Congress; Case-Church Amendment introduced. 27 January 1973: Paris Agreement formally signed.	27 January: Premier Tanaka welcomes Paris Agreement, Foreign Minister Ohira on Japan's international responsibilities to increase.	17-21 January: MITI Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro in Peking. 27 January: Renmin Ribao hails Paris Agreement.	23 January: Hanoi orders Viet Cong units to seize as much territory as possible. 27 January: Hanoi leadership call Paris Agreement 'partial victory'.	24 January: Nguyen Van Thieu on Paris Agreement only a ceasefire agreement.
28 January 1973: Vice-President Spiro Agnew to visit Southeast Asia; departs for Saigon.	30 January: Japan to make official contact with North Vietnam; Miyake Wasuke visit of February 1972 revealed.	31 January-2 February: Le Duc Tho in Peking.	28 February: Tran Van Tra due Saigon JMC. 30 January-7 February: Sihanouk in Hanoi.	30 January-1 February; Agnew in Saigon.
31 January: Kissinger visit to Hanoi (10-13 February) announced; Nixon to meet Thieu in the spring.			1 February: Nixon-Pham Van Dong letter handed over;	
3 February: Kissinger visit to Peking (15-19 February) announced.		7-16 February: Sihanouk in Guangdong.		
8 February: Kissinger in Bangkok.	8 February: Japan considering recognition of DRV.			
9 February: Kissinger and Tho 'secret agreement' on foreign military activity in Cambodia and Laos reported.				
10 February: AID described as being under the supervision of Kissinger (New York Times).				
10-13 February: Kissinger in Hanoi.	12 February: Japanese Ambassadors to Southeast Asia meet in Tokyo.			
15 February: Kissinger visit to Tokyo announced.	14 February: Postwar Reconstruction of Indochina discussed.			
	18 February: Meeting of Japanese Ambassadors in Bangkok.			
	20-23 February: Kissinger in Tokyo.			
21 February, Washington: Briefing on Major Foreign Policy Questions.				
22 February: Foreign Assistance Act of 1973.				12 February-3 March: Keidanren mission in South Vietnam & Laos.

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CHAPTER II

SIXTY DAYS & AFTER

MARCH - APRIL 1973

II : I

EXPLORING THE OPTIONS

In March 1973 the implementation of the Paris Agreement continued to be cause for concern in view of the repeated fighting and ceasefire violations on the ground in South Vietnam. The continued basis of US aid to Hanoi was defined on 11 March when the White House announced that it would ask Congress to approve postwar aid to Hanoi only if it lived up to its part of the Agreement.[1] The Administration would go ahead with the request on two conditions: the cessation of North Vietnamese infiltration into the South and the withdrawal of troops from Laos. No decision to press forward with the controversial programme would be made until mid- or late-May: six weeks after the deadline for the withdrawal of all US troops from South Vietnam.

The Nixon Administration appeared prepared at this junc-ture to allocate from the military and foreign aid budgets several hundred million dollars a year for aid to the DRV. Moreover if the truce terms were scrupulously observed by

all parties, some savings should be realised in the US$29 billion budget request for Southeast Asia operations for the fiscal year beginning 1 July 1973.[2] To critics, Secretary of State William Rogers made clear at a House Foreign Affairs Committee session on 6 March that no commitment whatsoever had been made till then for aid to Hanoi. It was necessary first to let the 60-day interval of the Agreement elapse and to discuss the matter 'at length' with the North Vietnamese. It might take another 60 days by the time the US made the request to Congress.[3]

A report submitted to Congress on 14 March 1973 by J. William Fulbright, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee concerning the Foreign Assistance Act of 1973 recommended a ceiling of US$226 million be set for fiscal 1973. This concerned US obligations in, for or on behalf of Cambodia and assistance to North Vietnam which should be prohibited without specific authorisation and appropriation by Congress.[4] Further obligations for assistance to South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos after 30 June 1973 would be similarly prohibited; and the financing of military assistance for South Vietnam and Laos would be required to come out of the Foreign Assistance Act appropriations after the same date.

On 13 March both the White House and the State Department expressed public concern for the first time over the ceasefire.[5] This represented some change from the Administration's previous position that despite anticipated differen-

ces, the accord was being carried out satisfactorily. Reflecting a 'high-level policy decision' within the Government, the statement said North Vietnamese movements were being watched 'very closely' with special reference to Articles 7 and 20. The principle of enforcing the Paris Agreement made the US address itself to two unwelcome questions: whether Washington could take steps to secure its enforcement and whether it had the right to do so.

Washington had already exerted diplomatic pressure against Hanoi in a series of notes sent on 4, 6, 14 and 15 March 1973 warning of 'grave consequences' if the infiltration continued and culminated in military action on Hanoi's part.[6] Parallel with pressure on Hanoi an attempt was made to exert pressure on Moscow. Kissinger warned Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin on 8 March about the continued supply of Soviet war material to North Vietnam which would constitute an 'unfriendly act'. Dobrynin attributed the flow to Peking in its 'eternal effort' to undermine a relaxation of tension between the US and the USSR.[7] This reassurance was not entirely convincing since an agreement on economic and military aid to North Vietnam in 1973 had in fact been signed in Moscow on 24 February when Foreign Minister Nguyen Duy Trinh was on his way to the Paris Conference.[8] Moreover on 9 March, Trinh was received in Moscow by Andrei Kirilenko, member of the Soviet politburo, who expressed the determination to further 'in every way' the development of cooperation

between the two countries.[9] In contrast when Trinh stopped over in Peking, the Chinese did not sign any agreement on military assistance to Hanoi.

The US began simultaneously to examine the military option. On 13 March a meeting of the Washington Special Actions Group (WSAG) resolved not to allow the 'enemy' under any circumstances to mount a big offensive that year.[10] On 14 March Kissinger submitted a memorandum to Nixon outlining Hanoi's possible motives.[11] It was possible Hanoi might be 'testing the limits' of US tolerance, Kissinger said, on the assumption that Washington would not react to its violations of the accord so long as it held the prisoners-of-war (POW's). Alternatively, Hanoi might have decided to resume the offensive as soon as it had finished resupplying itstroops. It was vital for the future of the accord that 'every action' be exhausted to explore options. Military contingency plans had to be drawn up since Hanoi was blatantly taking advantage of the fact that all air activity against it had ceased.

On 15 March President Nixon publicly voiced concern for the first time about the movement of North Vietnamese military equipment into South Vietnam and warned Hanoi not to 'lightly disregard' his words.[12] The level of infiltration of men and material into South Vietnam in excess of replacements permissible under the Agreement was now critical. Nixon was particularly concerned on two counts: One, because the violations occurred and Two, because they could lead to

'rather serious' consequences.

The efficacy of the Paris Agreement, as we have seen, rested on the maintenance of the 'equilibrium of forces' on the ground. If left unchecked, the issue of infiltration could well undermine the entire basis of the accord and reverse the principles on which it rested. The slow attrition of North Vietnamese troops on the South might give way instead to gradual and substantial growth. The communist military buildup appeared designed to ensure two ends: that there would be no attrition of the North Vietnamese forces remaining in the South and that while a protracted political struggle was going on, the military balance would not move decisively in favour of the Saigon Government.

The Viet Cong had their own charges regarding the implementation of the accord by Saigon and the US. During the 60-day period when the Four-Party JMC was operating, Tran Van Tra said the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) violated the accord 'more than 70,000 times'.[13] Tra was also incensed by the US bombing of Thien Ngon - an attempt to wipe out his delegation to the JMC - followed by subsequent bombing of designated 'pick-up points' dotted throughout the South. He blamed the US on 17 March for violating the accord by shipping 'great amounts' of munitions from Japan to South Vietnam, arguing that the US was guilty of bringing in material without the inspection required by the accord.[14] The munitions shipped in, the US argued were legal under the protocols

since they were brought in under the 'one-for-one basis' through Da Nang. The difference was that the communists were increasing their supply of weapons, bringing in new ones, at various points of entry, instead of at points specified under the Agreement.

By the third week of March Washington's patience was at an end. Military contingency plans were being prepared. These included a 'series of heavy strikes' over a two to three-day period over the Laotian panhandle and the northern reaches of South Vietnam's Military Region I where the North Vietnamese were 'exposed'. To Nixon's concern about what effect this might have on the POW's, Kissinger recommended the US launch an attack on 24-26 March after the third but before the fourth set of POW's were due for release.

But Nixon 'temporised', indicating on 21 March that he would prefer to hold up the troop withdrawals rather than attack. Kissinger ascribes this to the effects of Watergate which were 'boiling' then, to continue in subsequent months to debilitate and eventually destroy the President.[15]

At this point, fighting was reported around the outposts of Tong Le Chan and Rach Bap on 20 March resulting in the 'second largest' ARVN relief operation since the ceasefire. Tong Le Chan base in Military Region III was a border camp lying along enemy lines of communication between Tay Ninh, Binh Long and Binh Duong provinces. Its existence, according to Cao Van Vien, the South Vietnamese Chief of General

Staff (CGS), forced the Viet Cong to make long detours. On 25 March 1973 an intense communist effort began to force the evacuation of the base. The situation in 16 consecutive weeks became 'increasingly critical' resulting in the paralysis by both the ICCS and the JMC.[16]

In Washington the end of the 60-day period was marked by Nixon's address to the nation on 29 March 1973. For the first time in 12 years there were no US forces in Vietnam. Problem areas still remained : the provisions of the Agreement required an accounting for all those missing in action in Indochina; the provision with regard to Laos; and infiltration. The President warned Hanoi to comply with the Agreement and left its leaders with no doubt as to the 'consequences' if they failed to do so.[17]

Hanoi appeared more amenable towards the end of the 60-day period to diplomatic warnings in the form of notes from Kissinger. On 27 March Hanoi made a 'vague reference' to private meetings to review the accord. A more explicit note of 31 March proposed private meetings between Le Duc Tho and Kissinger to 'resolve difficulties' which might arise in the future implementation of the accord.[18]

II : II

AID AS PART OF THE EQUATION

'It was not only the military situation that was causing South Vietnamese officials apprehension. They were at least as concerned about critical economic problems. Indeed, with the need to keep military manpower levels up and thus defence expenditures high, with a drop in foreign exchange earnings because of the American withdrawal and with military uncertainties still a barrier to the kind of massive foreign investment that might fill the gap, South Vietnam was more than ever dependent on American financing of its huge budgetary and trade deficits.'

Lowenstein & Moose*

* Thailand, Laos, Cambodia & Vietnam : April 1973; A Staff Report prepared for the Use of the Subcommittee on US Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad, of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 11 June 1973, (Washington, D.C., US Government Printing Office, 1973); p.3.

The question of US aid to North Vietnam had been explored in the interim. The US and the DRV officially announced on 8 March that the first meeting of the JEC to discuss future economic relations would open in Paris on 15 March 1973.

The US three-man delegation would be headed by Maurice Williams, Deputy Director of the Agency for International Development (AID). His deputies would be John Mossler, former head of the US aid mission in South Vietnam and Donald Syvrud, Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury for International Affairs. The North Vietnamese would be led by Dang Viet Chau, Finance Minister, assisted by Nguyen Co Thach, Deputy Foreign Minister and Le Khac, Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Committee.

In Paris the JEC had held five sessions from 15 to 26 March which were described on 27 March as having made 'progress'.[19] Maurice Williams affirmed on 22 March that the US objective was to 'construct and reinforce' the peace by postwar reconstruction.[20] We now know that Congressional staff members James Lowenstein and Richard Moose - en route to Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam (28 March-19 April 1973) - had met on 26 March US JEC representatives in Paris, who described the talks as 'an exploration of the general possibilities' of an aid programme in North Vietnam.[21] Hanoi's position had apparently involved 'no political posturing'. Suspicious of multilateral aid, consortia or any other arrangements which could involve intermediaries, its delegates had merely spoken of the US 'moral commitment' to 'healing the wounds of war'. There had been relatively little indication from the North Vietnamese of their specific needs other than 'expressions of interest' in shelter, food and repair of

industrial and port facilities.

The US delegation therefore had not taken a 'fixed position' on the mechanism of the aid programme and preferred to discuss 'joint technical task teams'. An interest in postwar reconstruction had been expressed to the North Vietnamese but it was emphasised that a programme could not be submitted to Congress 'while the fighting was going on'. Hanoi, it was suggested, could 'absorb more aid' if there was demobilisation.[22]

Linked to aid was the progress of the political talks between the two South Vietnamese parties at La Celle-St Cloud. The first talks, begun on 19 March had exposed the fundamentally conflicting positions of the two sides. This was with particular reference to the role of the 'third force' in seeking resolution of a political settlement.[23] A three-point agenda for negotiations was then proposed by both sides. Saigon's chief delegate Dr Nguyen Luu Vien called for talks on general elections in South Vietnam, the formation of the NCNRC and the 'fundamental question' of the reduction and demobilisation of armed forces. The last clause had meant the withdrawal of North Vietnamese forces from the South. Saigon required agreement on the kind of elections to be held for existing offices before the NCNRC was established. The Viet Cong representative Nguyen Van Hieu wanted guarantees for the formation of a three-part NCNRC with representatives from Saigon, the Viet Cong and a third faction representing other South Vietnamese opinion. Hieu insisted on a constitutuent assembly before the Council was established and general elections.

Successive sessions of these talks on 22, 26 and 30 March developed into venues for mutual recriminations which showed no signs of abating.

Washington's attention was focused elsewhere. Nguyen Van Thieu's imminent visit (2-7 April) to the US was aimed at obtaining directly from Nixon, the minimal assurances underwriting the survival of the Republic of Vietnam (RVN). Specifically Thieu wanted to secure two items : An American pledge to intervene with airpower in case of a repetition of a fullscale North Vietnamese offensive; and a US guarantee of sufficient economic assistance to meet the costs of reconstruction above the existing US$500 million a year economic support.[24]

At San Clemente (2-3 April) Nixon privately repeated the pledges he had made in his correspondence with Thieu and promised to meet 'all contingencies' in case the Agreement was grossly violated.[25] The Joint Communique of 3 April 1973 threatened 'vigorous reactions' to any ceasefire violations and emphasised the 'unconditional withdrawal' of all forces foreign to Cambodian and Laos.[26] Thieu however did not fully comprehend the gathering impact of Watergate. Believing that Nixon would continue to pledge US support with airpower, Thieu could not foresee later developments including the War Powers Act and the bombing prohibition which would inhibit the President's powers.[27]

Nixon's public statements promised Thieu adequate and substantial economic assistance for the rest of the year. For the initial years of the postwar era the President committed himself to seek Congressional authority for a level of funding to assure economic stability and rehabilitation in South Vietnam. The 'limited resources' of the Indochina region, the Communique said, would require 'external assistance' to preserve the necessary social and political stability for 'peaceful evolution'. The economic development and self-sufficiency of South Vietnam also depended on its ability to promote and attract foreign investment. 'Other nations as well as international institutions', it hoped, would meet the RVN's needs in a concerted programme of international assistance.[28]

Thieu's private secretary and nephew, Hoang Duc Nha, later disclosed that Nixon's staff had attempted to get the South Vietnamese to concede to the 'specifics' of the economic assistance programme. The President, they argued, could not commit Congress in advance to economic aid. Saigon thus had to 'fight every inch of the way' on the Communique.[29]

Thieu's visit to Washington (4-7 April) coincided with the passing of the Byrd Amendment, sponsored by Senator Harry Byrd (Independent; Virginia), to preclude the transfer of foreign aid funds from other programmes to provide aid for Hanoi. This might have some connection with the return on 2 April, from Paris, of Maurice Williams to the US for consultations.[30] On 5 April the Senate voted overwhelmingly to forbid any direct

or indirect assistance to North Vietnam unless Nixon obtained specific and prior approval of Congress.[31]

Hanoi's response to developments came from Xuan Thuy, its representative to the Paris talks for more than four years. In Paris Thuy asserted on 5 April that the US was trying to 'stall' on applying provisions of the accord.[32] Only three mines had been removed from North Vietnamese waters to date and reconnaissance flights had been conducted over theDRV only 'from time to time'. At the JEC talks, when asked to discuss Article 21 Ch.8 refering to reconstruction assistance, the US only talked 'in generalities' on economic aid and refused to go into details. Hanoi wanted US contributions 'at the level of destruction' caused by their forces in Vietnam.

It was disclosed on 6 April while Thieu was in Washington, that he had asked Nixon for an American aid commitment of more than US$700 million yearly through to 1975 with a sharp reduction after that.[33] As economic aid to the RVN was currently running at US$600-700 million a year from all US sources, Thieu's aides had envisaged a need for a modest increase in 1974-75 to cover additional reconstruction efforts. Thieu also met Pierre-Paul Schweitzer, Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on the same day.[34]

In Washington, Thieu's ideas for 'economic Vietnamisation' took shape. Although he had been in touch with Nguyen Tien Hung, professor of economics at Howard University and an economist at the IMF, the two men had not met face to

face since September 1971.[35] Thieu now arranged for Hung to be briefed by Finance Minister Ha Xuan Trung on the economic discussions at San Clemente. Hung was also privy to a series of studies and economic models on South Vietnam's possible remodelling of its economy and government structure by planning, tax reforms, export incentives and employment policies. From US$1 billion in 1975, US economic support to the RVN would be reduced by 1980 to US$100 million. Appearing optimistic that his plans for economic self-sufficiency might reduce dependence on the US completely by then, Thieu suggested that Hung contribute to the economic reconstruction of South Vietnam.[36] Longterm economic development was not however guaranteed. Thieu, according to Hung, had not received any firm commitment from Nixon or the World Bank (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, IBRD).[37] A subsequent disclosure by Kissinger, in his letter dated 25 March 1974 to Senator Edward Kennedy (Appendix III), throws some light on this:

'In April 1973 President Thieu asked the IBRD (World Bank) to help form an aid group for the RVN. The IBRD agreed to make the effort, provided that this would be acceptable to the bank membership and that the group could be organised in association with both the IBRD and the ADB (Asian Develop -ment Bank).'

This explains why on his return to Saigon on 14 April, Thieu envisaged the 'end' of a difficult period and the begin-

ning of a new era of peaceful reconstruction for his country. He declared the convening by South Vietnam of an international conference 'within 6 weeks' to discuss multinational economic assistance in the 'postwar period'.[38]

Thieu secured only limited reassurances from Nixon regarding the situation on the ground in Indochina. Kissinger however preferred a 'dual track' approach combining diplomacy with military action in Vietnam in response to continued transgressions of the Paris Agreement. On 2 April he sent Nixon a detailed memorandum of further possible responses - both diplomatic and military - to Hanoi's violations.[39]

Beginning on 4-5 April a considerable increase in military activity was reported by Saigon with peaks of sharp but limited fighting which might invite further intensification.[40] In Washington the WSAG revealed an extensive complex of surface-to-air missiles south of the DMZ around Khe Sanh and in the Ashau Valley.[41] Following Defence Secretary Elliot Richardson's statement on 3 April that bombing could not be ruled out, the Joint Chiefs of Staff responded with demands for intensive bombing for 3 days. Kissinger as we have seen preferred to resort to diplomacy.

On 5 April while Thieu was in the US, a note was sent to Hanoi rejecting 'emphatically' the DRV's contention that the responsibility for implementing Article 7 regarding infiltration rested only on the two South Vietnamese parties.

The note insisted that Hanoi respected Articles 7 and 20 and warned of the 'most serious consequences' if violations continued. At the same time Kissinger proposed a meeting with Le Duc Tho at a 'mutually agreeable time' in Paris during the first week of May.[42]

To get a clearer picture of the deteriorating military situation in Indochina, Nixon sent General Alexander Haig, Jr., Army Vice-Chief of Staff to Bangkok, Vientiane, Phnom Penh and Saigon (8-12 April) to make a general assessment. To lay particular emphasis on the military threat to Cambodia, Haig would confer in Saigon with US officials as Thieu was away. In South Vietnam pressure had been kept up at Tong Le Chan although the two-party JMC - which had taken over from the four-party JMC on 28 March - remained at an impasse over the issue. An incident involving the downing of an ICCS helicopter by the Viet Cong on 7 April further aggravated what was already a tense situation. Haig therefore found truce observer activities in Saigon at a standstill.

On his return to Washington Haig met with Nixon on 15 April. His report to the President would serve as a focus for a major decision on what was to be done about the disintegrating ceasefire. A visit of this nature, Kissinger said,used to be a 'precursor to strong decisions' in the past; but this time, Nixon's obsession with Watergate diverted his attention.[43]

Washington began to weigh the possible options regarding pre-emptive strikes. This was a response to the continu-

ing reports of a weapons buildup by Hanoi and of military activities by its forces in South Vietnam and Cambodia. Nixon's dilemma was this: while he did not want to take any precipitate action that might destroy the ceasefire, he had to persuade Hanoi to live up to the terms of the Agreement and to dissuade it from possible plans for an offensive. The President apparently wanted to keep all possibilities open. Although incensed by the stepped-up communist military activity, the Administration regarded it 'premature' to describe the situation in Cambodia and South Vietnam as critical.

Among the courses of action considered were urgent diplomatic representations to North Vietnam, the Soviet Union and China, to halt supplies into South Vietnam. Other options included the use of airpower to attack the missiles in the Quang Tri area; renewed mining of the principal ports of North Vietnam and resumed bombing on a heavy scale over a limited duration of military targets in the Hanoi-Haiphong area.[44] These moves were aimed at forcing greater compliance with the ceasefire without fullscale resumption of war.

On 15 April Hanoi accepted the proposed Kissinger-Le Duc Tho meeting for 'any day after 15 May'.[45] Kissinger believed Tho wanted as long as possible, calculating that the US would not make any military attack until after the negotiations took place. Simultaneously Hanoi issued a note on 16 April outlining the US and the RVN's transgressions of the accord to the participants of the Paris Conference.[46]

By mid-April 1973, according to the US, 35,000 fresh North Vietnamese troops had entered South Vietnam, the total increase in combat personnel and supplies being 'greater than before the 1972 Easter offensive'.[47] In addition to infiltration a new North Vietnamese offensive was commencing in Laos. To avoid transgressions against the Agreement, Kissinger recommended bombing for 16 and 17 April on targets in Laos. This was accompanied by a note from Kissinger on 17 April condemning Hanoi's actions while responding with 'indignation and dismay' to their message of 15 April.[48] Agreement was reached however for a meeting in Paris between William Sullivan and Nguyen Co Thach on 27 April to precede the Kissinger-Tho talks.

At this stage developments reached what Kissinger referred to as a 'turning point'. The WSAG had met on 17 April in Washington to conclude that the prolonged bombing of the Ho Chi Minh Trail could not be endorsed unless the missiles south of the DMZ were first destroyed. This required a full seven days of bombing.[49] At the same time Kissinger had been shaken to hear that Watergate might touch Nixon himself. Under these circumstances Nixon could not be persuaded to start a prolonged bombing campaign. He recommended that the WSAG wait for a clearcut provocation from Hanoi while contin -uing with planning. In retrospect the decision actually allowed Hanoi to build up reserves and threaten Saigon unchallenged.

With the mounting transgressions in the South a decision was taken on 19 April to retaliate diplomatically against Hanoi.[50] The US suspended the JEC talks in Paris and recalled Maurice Williams to Washington for consultations. All minesweeping operations in North Vietnamese waters were also halted. Secretary Rogers warned Hanoi at the same time that unless it lived up to the ceasefire provisions, the US would cancel reconstruction aid plans. The three developments were the latest moves in what appeared to be a campaign to underline US displeasure at Hanoi's continued and flagrant breaches of the accord. A statement by the DRV Foreign Ministry on 19 April denounced the suspension of minesweeping and of the JEC as evidence of a 'premeditated plan' to prolong the blockade of North Vietnam in conjunction with the stepped-up war in Cambodia.[51] Despite a ban on such activity, the US resumed on the same day military reconnaissance flights over North Vietnam. This policy decision to violate parts of the Agreement 'if necessary' was seen as pressure on Hanoi to halt the 'more serious violations' and as 'signals' of retaliatory action.

In response to Hanoi's 16 April note, the US circulated on 20-21 April a note to the participants of the Paris Conference outlining violations of the accord by Hanoi and the PRG.[52] It listed the charges aired by Washington in recent weeks. On 20 April Hanoi accepted the preliminary meeting between Sullivan and Thach. On 21 April Kissinger informed

Nixon of Hanoi's message and discussed the NSC meeting planned for 26 April to make the final decision. This meeting never took place.[53]

By 23 April Kissinger was aware that Nixon was not going to order any retaliation against Hanoi.[54] If the US could neither threaten nor offer incentives, if it was criticised for attempting to maintain the Agreement by force and yet pressed not to provide economic incentives, Kissinger wondered which might be a motive for upholding the accord's implementation.

The political talks at La Celle-St Cloud did not fare any better. They continued throughout April as a venue for angry debate. Issues marginal to the political talks themselves obscured the real problems. The session on 3 April, coinciding with Thieu's US visit, saw angry exchanges about the purpose of further aid to South Vietnam. On 12 April, both sides submitted new formulations of their respective proposals without substantially modifying conflicting positions. The session of 18 April stalled. That of 25 April witnessed both sides trading new plans for a political settlement a mere two days before the end of the 90-day period stipulated in the Agreement. Saigon presented a two-point proposal with a firm calendar that would culminate with national elections on 26 August 1973. The Viet Cong responded with a six-point proposal that they claimed went to the 'fundamentals' and avoided setting deadline.[55] The chasm between the two sides thus widened.

By the end of April 1973 the potential economic framework for stability in Vietnam faced uncertain prospects. Kissinger was preoccupied with the aid question as a method of restraining Hanoi. At the suspension of the JEC on 19 April, Rogers said a reconstruction programme in Indochina was a 'major influence' in ensuring the integrity of the peace and even in 'altering the framework of relationships' between the US and North Vietnam.[56] Particularly close attention this spring, he said in this US foreign policy report, would be devoted to ensuring that the US had the means and capability of pursuing this policy to a successful completion. This programme would be one in which 'other nations, notably Japan', and members of the European Community also make an 'important contribution'.

An 'active effort', according to Lowenstein and Moose, was underway in Washington 'as of late April 1973' to find new ways to put more dollars into the South Vietnamese economy.[57] Among the possibilities being explored was some means of increasing Defence Department procurement in Vietnam.There had been reservations given the withdrawal of US troops and the heavy requirement for supplies, equipment and contractual services available 'only to the US'. In 1972 Vietnam, it was disclosed, received US$20.3 million in soft loans from Japan, the United Kingdom and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). In 1973 Saigon expected a total of US$50.1 million in foreign

assistance from donors 'other than the US', of which Japan would contribute US$20 million. On top of the US$50.1 million in regular ongoing economic assistance, the RVN expected specific reconstruction, development and humanitarian assistance.

The report dated 11 June 1973 warned that even if the Vietnamese economy was supported 'at the present level', US economic assistance to Vietnam in fiscal 74 would have to increase substantially from the fiscal 73 level of US$649.3 million to US$800 million. Although it was possible that 'certain components' of the existing programme could be 'renamed' to give them the appearance of reconstruction aid, this figure would not provide for a significant reconstruction programme.[58]

This situation was exacerbated by the US' reluctance at the opening of the 6th annual meeting of the ADB in Manila (26-28 April) to contribute to a special development fund for the region.[59] ADB Vice-President C.S.Krishna Moorthi said the US$525 million fund would have 'meaningful import' for Asia. The Bank had been assured of support from the Nixon Administration but the US contribution faced Congressional objections. US delegate, Under Secretary of the Treasury, Paul Volcker, said on 26 April that there were 'legitimate questions' to the US reluctance to contribute.[60] The US move was said to be holding up some pledges from other countries, including Japan who had pledged, in addition to US$45.5 million promised for loans earlier in the year, to give a third

of the US$525 million fund. Apart from the fund, the ADB, its President Inoue Shiro said, had agreed on major assistance to Indochina and would have an 'important role' in the reconstruction of Vietnam. As North Vietnam was not a member, it was unclear if it could participate in the Bank's programmes. Despite Inoue's hope that the US might contribute 'in due time', Volcker indicated the contrary. The low procurement patterns followed by the ADB rules he said made it difficult for American companies to compete.[61]

These developments were in fact linked to a larger strategy concurrently taking shape in which Japan would have a prominent role in Indochina. And it involved North as well as South Vietnam.

JAPAN AT A CROSSROADS

' ... the post-Vietnam peace guarantee structure has a different nature from any of the security systems in which the US took part, taking the initiative, after the end of World War II. In the cold war age there were no world peace maintenance systems devised by the US, whether they were bilateral or collective, which did not entail, at the very foundation, the concept and action of 'military commitment' ... the role of big powers for ensuring international peace has basically changed from 'intervention with power' to 'restraint of power'. Herein lies the basic nature of the Paris Resolution.'

Nihon Keizai Shimbun

4 March 1973*

'The adjustment of diplomatic relations with North Vietnam will lead to the establishment of diplomatic relations by both sides of a divided nation, and this will become a big step toward rectification of the cold war structure. This is also a test case of our country's new diplomacy toward Asia.'

Tokyo Shimbun

17 March 1973**

'If there are some people who hesitate to establish diplomatic relations with North Vietnam because of the fluidity and uncertainty of the war situation in Indochina, they may be said

to be those who do not understand the spirit and mechanism of the Paris Agreement ...the present confusion in Indochina cannot become a reason for further delay in our recognition of North Vietnam.'

Asahi Shimbun

15 April 1973***

* in DSJP, 7 March 1973, p.2.

** in DSJP, 17 March 1973, p.1.

*** in DSJP, 19 April 1973, p.2.

All developments on Indochina had been subject to scrutiny by Japan. Tokyo's conspicuous absence at the Paris Conference had led the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's (LDP) Secretary-General, Hashimoto Tomisaburo, to lament on 26 February 1973 that he did not recall any instance in which Japan was properly consulted internationally in the 'process of problem solving'.[62] Japan, he said, was not even a member of the UN Security Council. Despite its exclusion and the lack of political recognition due to it as a leading economic power, Japan was nevertheless gauging its role in the rehabilitation of Indochina.

Diplomatic relations with Hanoi as we have seen, had been held in abeyance. Vice-Foreign Administrative Minister Hogen Shinsaku's recent visit to South Vietnam revealed that

there were no objections to Japanese recognition of the DRV. Foreign Minister Ohira emphasised on 26 February though that Japan should not hesitate to establish relations with the DRV under favourable circumstances.[63] Two days later Premier Tanaka was privy to a plan for the dispatch of a multiparty dietmen's mission to North Vietnam for reconstruction purposes. Its exponent was none other than Kimura Takeo who had met Zhou Enlai in January 1973.[64]

But the proceedings of the Paris Conference were said on 1 March, at the Lower House Budget Committee, to cast doubts on Indochina rehabilitation.[65] The Paris resolution of 2 March also dampened any hope for the Asia-Pacific conference. Hanoi's express preference for bilateral over multilateral aid was discouraging. This notwithstanding, Tokyo appeared anxious to accomodate to Hanoi's demands. Ohira stated on 8 March that his ministry might consider a change to favour bilateral as against multilateral aid to the DRV. The latter, he conceded, might prove difficult to implement and thus make a new reconstruction programme unfeasible.[66] On 12 March Ohira said for the first time that although Tokyo was not in contact with the PRG, Japanese extension of aid to Indochina might include areas under its control.[67]

These statements did not go unnoticed. Hanoi's goodwill towards Tokyo was evident in Paris, where on 14 March 1973, the North Vietnamese General Representative, Vo Van Sun, per-sonally called on Japanese Ambassador, Nakayama Yoshihiro,

to discuss matters of 'mutual interest' to both sides.[68] This level of contact set a new precedent. Unofficial contacts had previously been carried out in Paris and Vientiane but now it looked as if Paris would set the stage for ambassadorial-level contacts between Japan and the DRV. What followed was the official confirmation on 15 March of Miyake Wasuke's visit to the DRV to lay the foundation for further planning by Tokyo. Miyake's visit was now timed for around 20 April.[69]

Japan had no intention however of slackening the pace of its contacts with South Vietnam. The reconstruction of the RVN had been studied in the interim (12 February-3 March) by the Keidanren official, Senga Tetsuya, who also visited Cambodia and Laos.[70] He proposed on his return to Tokyo that 'non-reimbursable' aid be extendeded simultaneously for economic reconstruction and refugee relief. The rebuilding of South Vietnam's infrastructure might be followed by capital investment and reconstruction aid in forestry, fisheries, marine resources and agriculture. The Keidanren would discuss the programme in the context of a broader Indochina reconstruction plan and would establish an Indochina Committee to examine the consequences of war damage in South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos to gauge the likely amount of aid.[71] South Vietnam was singled out as 'an exception' however since a reconstruction plan existed to which the Thieu government hoped Japan would respond.

More immediately Tokyo was preoccupied by the question

of its relations with Moscow and Peking in which context it might improve relations with Hanoi. Zhou Enlai, as we have seen, had described Japan in the spring of 1973 as being 'at a crossroads'.[72] On 3 March Japan's armed forces had drafted their first military doctrine setting forth fundamental plans for defending the nation from any attack by the Soviet Union or China.[73] Purely military in character, the plan did not reflect Japan's diplomatic posture towards the two nations.

Tokyo was ready simultaneously to remove the major obstacle to concluding a peace treaty with the Soviet Union, who had refused after World War II to sign the San Francisco Treaty of 1951 between the allied powers and Japan. Although Moscow had later signed a 'declaration of peace' with Japan in 1956 to end the state of war between them, Tokyo rejected any peace treaty unless four Soviet-held islands (Etorofu, Habomai, Kunashiri and Shikotan) were returned. Negotiations over the treaty had begun in the autumn of 1972 when Foreign Minister Ohira visited Moscow for talks with his Soviet counterpart Andrei Gromyko.[74]

A Japanese Foreign Ministry statement on 7 March 1973 now indicated that it might be possible for Japan to sign a treaty officially ending the war without having obtained the return of the four islands.[75] It was subsequently disclosed that Premier Tanaka had sent a letter to General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), Leonid Brezhnev, on 6 March proposing that negotiations on the

peace treaty be reopened.[76] Joint economic development of Siberia was also sought by Tokyo. Japan's Ambassador to Moscow, Niiseki Kinya, had delivered the letter to Brezhnev, which resulted in an 'unprecedented meeting' with the Soviet leader lasting some two and a half hours. What was significant about this conversation was the fact that Tanaka's letter omitted Japan's claim to the islands; and the length of the conversation itself - especially when Brezhnev had declined to see Ohira in 1972 - was interpreted as an indication of Moscow's desire to improve relations. On 12 March, after the Brezhnev-Niiseki meeting, Tanaka publicly expressed for the first time, his hopes to visit Moscow for talks with Kremlin leaders 'whenever an opportunity arises'.[77] An 'authoritative Soviet source' informed Kyodo on 16 March that Moscow was receptive to the idea of Tanaka visiting the Soviet Union although it was 'impossible' to improve Japanese-Soviet relations without concluding a formal peace treaty between the two countries.[78]

Regarding China, the important exchanges of mid-January were strengthened by the Peking visit (17 February-26 March) of Saionji Kinkazu. Resident in China for some time after 1949 and described as Japan's 'unofficial ambassador', Saionji had been credited with the diplomacy leading to the Japan-China rapprochement.[79] A statement on 7 March by Zhou Enlai during his meeting with Saionji, confirmed the planned visit to

Japan of Liao Chengzhi.[80] Liao, as we have seen, played an important part in the institution of 'Memorandum Trade' between China and Japan in the 1950's and 1960's. As Head of the China-Japan Friendship Association he would lead in April, the first high-powered mission to visit Japan since September 1972.

While in Peking Saionji referred on 8 March to the fact that both China and the Soviet Union had been courting Japan. These moves, he said, provided an opportunity for the settlement of many 'pending issues' despite the danger that unless Japan maintained 'principles' it would be involved in Sino-Soviet confrontation.[81] China's cultivation of Japan might be interpreted as an attempt to block the efforts of the Soviet Union, China's foremost adversary, from extending its influence in Asia. This was evident in Liao Chengzhi's statement of 10 March when he invoked the Joint Communique of 29 September 1972 as the basis for determining the future of Sino-Japanese relations.[82] Echoing Zhou Enlai's fear of the Soviet Union, Liao accepted it as a matter of course for an independent nation like Japan to have substantial defence power: in an 'emergency' situation it would have to rely on the US nuclear umbrella since China's nuclear potential was too small to be of any use. China was not opposed to friendly relations between Japan and 'other countries' and understood the circumstances under which Japan needed resources.

But if Japan supplied fuel through the Tyumen oil pipeline to the Soviet military forces for a possible invasion of China, 'considerable measures', Liao warned, could be taken.

The Japan-China dialogue was also to provide a forum for regular political consultations. Saionji's departure from China on 26 March coincided with the exchange of ambassadors between the two countries: Chen Zhu left for Tokyo on 27 March and Ogawa Heishiro left for Peking on 29 March.[83] On 2 April Ohira transmitted a letter to Foreign Minister Ji Pengfei with the express intention of making a 'strategic arrangement' for periodic consultations between Tokyo and Peking in the near future; while envisaging a possible visit by Ji himself to Japan.[84]

In Tokyo the enthusiasm generated by the proposed Miyake visit to Hanoi was proving contagious. Contact with Hanoi was also sought by the Japanese opposition. Nishimura Kanichi of the Japanese Socialist Party (JSP) was said on 19 March to be planning to visit Hanoi 'at the earliest possible opportunity' and might go there at about the same time as Miyake.[85] Nishimura had in fact visited Hanoi immediately prior to Miyake's secret visit in February 1972 and had conferred with Premier Pham Van Dong.

At this point a debate opened in Tokyo concerning the question of the PRG. Vexed by Japan's relations with the Vietnamese,

the JSP's Den Hideo on 24 March accused the Foreign Ministry at an Upper House Budget Committee of alleging that the PRG was a 'government without a capital'.[86] Ohira's cautious response had reiterated that Japan respected the 'right to self-determination' of the South Vietnamese people specifically 'both parties' in South Vietnam. On Den's insistence, Ohira emphasised that the Paris Agreement did not imply any question of the PRG's recognition. Japan would maintain diplomatic relations with the 'legally constituted' government of South Vietnam and there was no question of recognising the PRG.

The possible admission of PRG members into Japan as raised by Den complicated matters. Justice Minister Tanaka Isaji's response was that depending on 'circumstances' such as aid, they might be permitted to enter the country. The actual facts of the situation warranted examination. When questioned whether Nguyen Van Hieu of the PRG (Deputy leader at the La Celle-St Cloud talks) might come to Japan for reconstruction talks; Tanaka replied that Tokyo was prepared to receive him 'if the individual and conditions were as mentioned'.[87]

A flurry ensued in the Japanese cabinet since Tanaka's remarks made no reference to the Thieu Administration. A Five-Point statement was hurriedly issued later the same day by the Chief Cabinet Secretary Nikaido Susumu with an amendment. Tanaka's response now read: 'with the understanding of

the Nguyen Van Thieu Government'. The Nikaido statement attempted to stress the following principles:

One, that Japan 'consistently maintained' its cooperation in reconstruction aid plans concerning the 'whole' of Vietnam; Two, visitors from Vietnam would be limited to those linked with reconstruction aid for the entire country; Three, the entry into Japan by Hieu would probably not be permitted; Four, the facts of the situation as mentioned only applied to reconstruction aid to Vietnam; Five, as the La Celle-St Cloud talks were still in session the same principle would apply to a South Vietnamese government mission's request to enter Japan. The issue of the entry of PRG representatives would thus be examined on a 'case-by-case' basis.[88]

The fiasco provided a field day for the opposition. Intending to exploit it to the full, the JSP and other parties prepared on 26 March a motion of no confidence at the Diet Policy Committee. Unless the Government took a definite position, they would boycott the Budget Committee.[89] Ohira, Tanaka and Nikaido quickly issued a statement the same day saying there was basically 'no reason' to prevent entry into Japan by PRG leaders.[90] There had been 'no discrepancy' and the actual facts of the situation on which their entry would depend, had merely been individually expressed by Tanaka and Nikaido. All this was undone when Vice-Administrative Forei-

gn Minister Hogen Shinsaku stated the same day that as Japan recognised only the Saigon Administration, aid in principle would only be extended to it. Entry by PRG representatives 'would not therefore be approved'. On 27 March Ohira made Hogen amend his statement.[91]

Ohira's anxiety to 'settle' the PRG issue was clearly directed at papering over the differences since the embarassment over government inconsistencies could not cloud the imminent Miyake visit to Hanoi. As a gesture of goodwill, four North Vietnamese technicians of the DRV's Machine Import-Export Corporation were given approval on 31 March to enter Japan for business negotiations for up to 60 days.[92]

Miyake's Hanoi visit was to be part of a larger design pursued by Tokyo in its own search for a new Asian order. Tanaka and Ohira had previously expressed interest in an Asian conference along the lines of Bandung in 1955. Indonesia's Foreign Minister Adam Malik had arrived in Tokyo on 2 April for a General Meeting of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) to open on 11 April.[93] In this connection the Japanese Foreign Ministry disclosed the same day that it had examined the possibility of establishing an Asian cooperation organisation following the disintegration of the Asian and Pacific Council (ASPAC) whose members included Japan and South Vietnam. This idea might have had some

bearing on the visit from 25 March of former MITI Minister, Miyazawa Kiichi, to Southeast Asia, including South Vietnam (4-7 April) with the stated aim of improving bilateral relations.[94] Miyazawa also visited Indonesia, Thailand and Burma at the same time.

It had been disclosed in Tokyo on 1 April that Miyake Wasuke would visit Hanoi for 'about a week' from 20 April for a formal exchange of views on diplomatic relations and Indochinese rehabilitation aid.[95] Japan's basic diplomatic posture on international issues would also be explained. Equally important were Hanoi's intentions concerning Indochina reconstruction aid including: humanitarian emergency aid; the establishment of standards for exchange stabilisation and fullscale rehabilitation aid. One billion Yen had been earmarked for aid in the Fiscal 73 budget and additional disbursements from the reserve fund were being considered. One hitherto undisclosed issue possibly connected with Miyake's visit was the extension of loans. In this connection Asian Development Bank (ADB) President Inoue Shiro explained in Tokyo on 27 March that although the Bank intended to cooperate in the reconstruction and development of Indochina, the extension of loans was difficult since North Vietnam was not a member of the UN and it had made known its preference for bilateral aid.[96] This prefence necessitated an adjustment of views when Miyake reached Hanoi.

Hanoi now moved the Miyake visit forward by about a week to 14 April. Such was optimism in Tokyo that Tanaka and Ohira were described on 9 April as having consolidated a policy to recognise the DRV 'even this summer'. As the first Japanese governmental contact with Hanoi, the Miyake mission was vested with 'extraordinary powers' designed to lay the cornerstone of Japan's policy towards North Vietnam.

While not authorised to reach an agreement with the North Vietnamese, Miyake, the Foreign Ministry's 'senior specialist' and Head of the North Vietnam desk, was urged during the visit (14-21 April) to explore Hanoi's intentions. Tokyo was ready to recognise Hanoi if 'mutually acceptable conditions' were agreed upon. On Ohira's instructions Miyake revealed what Japan could do to help North Vietnam's efforts at postwar rehabilitation for which Tokyo had made necessary preparations in advance. The question of the DRV's participation in the ECAFE and other organisations was also to be discussed.[97]

In the event Miyake held discussions with North Vietnamese Vice-Foreign Minister Hoang Van Tien and Vice-Foreign Trade Minister Nguyen Van Dao covering diplomacy, trade and economic relations, regional cooperation, the international situation and arrangements for future negotiations. The content of the talks was not revealed, although on transit in Vientiane on 21 April en route to Tokyo, Miyake said Hanoi's reaction to recognition was 'extremely enthusiastic'.[98]

It was later revealed on Miyake's return to Tokyo on 23 April that both sides had reached agreement on: One, the location of negotiations, believed to be Paris; Two, a target date for the establishment of diplomatic relations and Three, the general framework for economic aid.

Although Hanoi had expressed preference for a bilateral formula, the North Vietnamese were apparently not totally opposed to a multilateral arrangement. Bilateral aid, if forthcoming, was envisaged on a large scale and would include projects for the reconstruction of war damage, roads, communication facilities and industry. Although a postwar reconstruction plan had not as yet been formulated by Hanoi, Tokyo's views on regional cooperation and the international conference evoked little response.

Despite the overall goodwill on both sides, Miyake hinted that this did not mean that was 'no gap' between the respective positions.[99] Refusing to disclose what this was, he only said it might be settled by 'mutual effort'. Extensive talks were held by Ohira and Hogen with Miyake before a statement was issued on 24 April. Speculation in the Japanese press suggested that the PRG was probably the 'biggest obstacle' to the talks since Tokyo had no plans to recognise it as a legitimate government. According to Miyake himself, Hanoi had understood the delicacy of the PRG issue and did not press for its recognition.[100] This was consistent with

Ohira's statement on 24 April 1973 which expressed Tokyo's readiness to begin plenary negotiations for establishing diplomatic relations with Hanoi as 'no serious obstacle'emerged.[101]

The goodwill towards Japan notwithstanding, developments in Hanoi throughout March and April 1973 had pointed to a possible escalation of the war in the South. Beginning in March 1973 the Vietnam Workers Party (VWP) Politburo had 'urgently' begun preparations for the 21st plenum of the Party Central Committee 'to determine the direction and policies' to fulfil the 'eventual liberation' of the South and the unification of the country.[102]

The end of the 60-days was marked in Hanoi by the arrival on 30 March of Tran Van Tra, Head of the PRG delegation to the JMC to discuss developments in B-2, the code-name for the southernmost part of Vietnam where the war was being fought. Tra relates that he had met immediately with leaders of the party, the government and the ministries of National Defence and Foreign Affairs.[103]

However during a break before a plenary session of the Politburo, a 'separate meeting' concerning B-2 had been held. Attended by members of the Central Office, South Vietnam (COSVN) and the Regional Command: Pham Hung, Nguyen Van Linh, Tran Nam Trung, Hoang Van Thai and Vo Van Kiet; the situation in B-2 was analysed to reach agreement

on 'our evaluation, observations and estimates' of future developments.[104] Experiences were also exchanged with Vo Chi Cong and Chu Huy Man of Military Region 5 and Hoang Minh Thao also of B-2. The nuances suggested that COSVN perhaps had its own ideas about the conduct of war in B-2.

We are aware that in April 1973 Secretary-General of the VWP Le Duan had expressed 'extremely important opinions' to the politburo in preparation for the Party Central Committee plenum.[105] Intended to discuss the 'revolutionary situation' Le Duan had concluded that the US 'imperialists' had been defeated and had withdrawn 'never to return'.

It was only during the 'last third of April 1973' according to Tra, that any lingering doubts and dissension about the war in the South appeared to have been overcome. An 'extremely important' conference including delegates from the South Vietnamese theatres had taken place. Held to 'reevaluate the situation' the conference had delineated the 'path of advance' of the revolution in the South with instructions for B-2 to maintain the line of 'strategic offensive'. The Viet Cong would be withdrawn from enemy areas to be consolidated and reorganised 'as soon as possible'.[106]

Tra admits to a 'clashing of many different opinions and interpretations' concerning developments in the battlefields, but 'unanimous agreement' at the conference was finally reached.[107] He goes further to say that 'until that

time' not everyone at various echelons, on the battlefields or 'even at the Central Committee' agreed about the value of the Paris Agreement. The 'balance of forces' between the enemy and themselves were thus strategically debated. The role of each theatre Tra stressed, had necessarily to be 'correctly evaluated' if 'dangerous mistakes' were not to be made. It was not as if 'no mistakes' had been made in the war, Tra hinted, but these had been 'promptly corrected'. Even collective leadership, Tra pointedly added, was 'not always right'.[108] In the event the concerns of all war theatres were 'fully resolved': the path of revolution in the South was 'revolutionary violence'.

Throughout April Hanoi's diplomatic strategy was correspondingly two-pronged, aimed at seeking from its allies, continued support for its military effort in the South while requesting aid for reconstruction. En route home from Paris Xuan Thuy had elicited in Moscow (8-12 April) a reaffirmation from the CPSU's leading ideologue, Mikhail Suslov, of its 'invariable support' for Hanoi's 'just cause'. The Soviet Union would 'continue as before' to give the DRV the 'necessary assistance' in the advance to socialism.[109]

By the end of April 1973 initiatives in Hanoi suggested that the option of an eventual return to war was kept open. But Cambodia had no options, it was bearing the brunt of the fighting in Indochina.

26 FEBRUARY — 27 MARCH 1973

TABLE II

USA	JAPAN	NORTH VIETNAM
26 February - 2 March 1973. Paris: International Conference on Vietnam.	26 February: LDP Secretary-General laments Japan's exclusion from international concourse.	
	28 February: Ohira on aid to Indochina and possible recognition of DRV; Kimura sees Tanaka.	
	1 March; Lower House debate question of Indochina rehabilitation.	
2 March 1973: Nixon on aid to Hanoi dependent on implementation of Agreement; Thieu visit to US (2-7 April) announced.		
	3 March: Japan's first defence plan since war disclosed; Keidanren mission back from South Vietnam.	
5 March: Defence Secretary warns Hanoi on aid.		
6 March: William Rogers meets House Foreign Affairs Committee.		
8 March: US-DRV Joint Economic Commission (JEC) established.	8 March: Ohira on Tokyo's policy change to favour bilateral over multilateral aid to North Vietnam.	
11 March: White House announces it would ask Congress to approve postwar aid to Hanoi.		14 March, Paris: DRV General Delegate meets Japanese Ambassador.
13 March: WSAG Meeting.		15 March: DRV and Japan affirm Miyake Wasuke visit to Hanoi.
14 March: Foreign Assistance Act of 1973.		
15 March: Nixon voices public concern over Hanoi's transgressions of ceasefire. Paris: 1st session of US-DRV JEC.		24 March: Siege of Tong Le Cham.
26 March, Paris: Lowenstein & Moose meet US-DRV JEC delegation.	26 March: Opposition parties prepare a motion to question government inconsistencies over Vietnam.	
	27 March: Consensus reached over PRG issue.	

TABLE III

2-28 April 1973

USA	JAPAN	SOUTH VIETNAM
2 April 1973, Paris: Maurice Williaes of AID returns to Washington.		
2-3 April: Nguyen Van Thieu aeets Nixon at San Clemente.		2-7 April: Nguyen Van Thieu visits the US.
3 April: Joint US-RVN Communique.		
4 April, Washington: Byrd Amendment		
4-7 April: Thieu visits Washington.		4-7 April: Miyazawa Kiichi in South Vietnam.
6 April: Thieu visits IMF		
April 1973: Kissinger on Thieu request to World Bank (Appendix III).		
	11 April: ECAFE conference in Tokyo.	
19 April: US suspends JEC, Williams recalled.	14-21 April: Miyake Wasuke in Hanoi.	14 April: Thieu on international conference in South Vietnam 'within six weeks'.
23 April: Kissinger aware that Nixon not retaliating against Hanoi.	23 April: Miyake returns to Tokyo; Ohira on possible diplomatic relations with DRV.	
26 April: Paul Volcker on low procurement funds of ADB.		
28 April, Manila: ADB on US reluctance to contribute to special development fund holding up pledges from Japan.		
Late April: Lowenstein & Moose on US effort underway to find new ways of putting aore dollars into South Vietnam.		

II : IV

CAMBODIA STILL AT WAR

'Sixty days after the Paris Agreement, Cambodia had become the central theatre of the continuing Indochina war. Although the US was not involved with ground troops, the involvement in other ways was direct and intimate. The roles of the US in air operations and in Cambodian political affairs ..... are intimately related because ..... the principal purpose of US air operations had become to enable the Lon Nol government to survive in the face of a military offensive by an enemy force almost exclusively Khmer and not North Vietnamese.

Lowenstein & Moose*

* Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam : April 1973, A Staff Report prepared for the use of the Subcommittee on US Security Agreements and Commitments abroad of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 11 June 1973, (Washington, D.C., 1973); pp.1-2.

CRISIS IN PHNOM PENH : 17 - 25 MARCH 1973

By March 1973 Cambodia remained the only country in Indochina fully at war. Daily bombing raids by B-52's perpetuated this condition with the US as the direct participant. The

Lon Nol regime, at the edge of collapse and faced with severe political and military decline, was bolstered annually by US $200 million in military and economic aid. The demoralising situation posed a threat to Cambodia's continued existence and to the survival of South Vietnam. The US now attempted to bring about change in its leadership.

The Cambodian political scene had been dominated since Sihanouk's ouster in March 1970 by a struggle between two men who exercised influence over the President: his brother, Lon Non, and former Premier, Prince Sisowath Sirik Matak. Since the beginning of 1973 the US had apparently urged Lon Nol to persuade Sirik Matak to accept the vacant Vice-Presidency. This effort to share power received a setback on 7 March when Lon Non publicly declared his opposition to it. In an unprecedented statement he claimed that a 'mass movement'- from which 'only the communists' could gain - would be unleashed if Sirik Matak joined the government.[110] Afraid that the latter might compromise with the Khmer Rouge, Lon Non voiced his own concessions: if the insurgents laid down their arms, they might, under a constitution, participate in elections and return to join the government.

But there were discrepancies within ruling circles in Phnom Penh concerning contact with the resistance. Lon Nol himself had made a speech on 6 March offering to discuss the North Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia.[111] But the Marshal was circumspect, avoiding mention of the resistance by

name, offering only to negotiate with Hanoi. This contrasted with Foreign Minister Long Boret's statement in Paris in early March when he said that there was no question of dialogue with GRUNK but that his side was willing to talk to the Khmer Rouge and perhaps allow them to participate in the Administration.[112]

These discrepancies apart, mounting opposition and general public disaffection for the Lon Nol Government had surfaced on 20 February in a strike by teachers and students in Phnom Penh. It came to a head on 17 March with an assassination attempt on Lon Nol. Two bombs were dropped on the Presidential Palace by Captain So Photra, a son-in-law of Sihanouk.[113] Under the ensuing state of emergency proclaimed the same day all public meetings were banned and a censorship decree was promulgated. On 21 March Sirik Matak and former Premier after World War II, Son Ngoc Thanh were relieved of their duties.[114] Lon Nol's Minister of Information explained the next day that 'certain persons' suspected of working for or sympathising with the 'Viet Cong' or the 'monarchists' had been arrested.[115] By then the removal of officials found 'disloyal' to the regime had reached 400. On 25 March Sirik Matak was reported to be under house arrest and any possibility of contact between the Government and the Khmer Rouge reached deadlock.[116]

The crisis in Phnom Penh was paralleled by several initiatives from GRUNK aimed at national reconciliation. In Hanoi,

GRUNK Ambassador, Sien An said on 21 March that the solution to Cambodia laid in Sihanouk's 23 March 1970 statement.[117] We now know that the Prince himself had embarked from mid-February onwards on a secret trip to the 'liberated zone'. From the interior he issued - on the third anniversary of GRUNK's foundation - his 42nd message to the nation. It reiterated that FUNK and GRUNK had offered negotiations 'without preconditions' with 'one or several emissaries' of the US government with a view to finding a solution to the problem of restoring peace in Cambodia.[118] Rebuffed by Washington, there was no alternative but to continue the war there. In Peking GRUNK's emissary Chea San marked 23 March by a request to French Ambassador, Etienne Manac'h, to seek the Élysée's intervention to encourage the US to abandon Lon Nol.[119]

The first sign that either side was prepared to discuss the possibility of peace emerged on 24 March when the Lon Nol government rejected another attempt by the Khmer Rouge at reconciliation. An offer of talks had been transmitted in a letter to Premier Hang Thun Hak and brought to Phnom Penh a week earlier, possibly at the time the emergency was proclaimed.[120] It was allegedly written by Hou Youn, Minister of the Interior in the maquis. The letter contained - among other things - a proposal that representatives of both sides meet to begin political and military negotiations that excluded Lon Nol. The other conditions were not disclosed. Accord-

ing to diplomatic sources at the time, the Premier and Hou Youn had been exchanging letters for 'about six weeks' suggesting the correspondence might have begun in early February after the truce.

The Khmer Rouge response to these rebuffs at reconciliation was to heighten their efforts aimed at eventual victory. The ascendancy of the insurgents was also clear to Sihanouk. From Guangdong and Hanoi, he visited the maquis and was able to witness at firsthand the internecine relations between the Khmer Rouge and their Vietnamese comrades-in-arms.[121] He was particularly struck by the latter's military installations and bases dotted, without authorisation from FUNK, throughout the maquis.[122] Correspondingly there was an obvious slowing down of military and other aid from China. North Vietnamese operations were directed at destruction of the insurgents' best units. Khieu Samphan, Defence Minister informed the prince that Hanoi wanted desperately to forestall any hope of a Khmer Rouge 'victory' and was already planning to install in any event a government that was Vietnamese in all but name to serve its own interests in Cambodia.[123]

Overt Khmer Rouge disenchantment against the Vietnamese according to Sihanouk, began to be manifested in April 1973. Anti-Vietnamese feeling led correspondingly to a hardening of Khmer Rouge policy towards the Americans and all cadres were instructed not to negotiate with the US.[124] There was a

tendency in some quarters to desist from mention of Sihanouk who was regarded as too plaint. Although the Khmer Rouge were openly hostile to Lon Nol, the prince knew full well that he was himself an 'inevitable and temporary ally'.[125]

On arrival in Hanoi on 6 April however Sihanouk gave the appearance of having received the allegiance of all factions opposed to Lon Nol while in the 'liberated zone'. The Hanoi daily, Nhan Dan on 7 April described Sihanouk as the 'holder of the legality, authenticity and continuity' of the Cambodian state.[126] Sihanouk took the opportunity in Hanoi to lash out at 'foreign' governments who pretended to be 'Indochina peacemakers'. In the maquis he had been instructed to inform the world outside that no compromise 'in any form or circumstance', no ceasefire and no conference were accepted.[127]

By the time Sihanouk was back in Peking (11-14 April) the momentum towards resolution of the Cambodian question was set in motion against a background of domestic political change. China was engaged in intensive discussions with a number of powers including France, where a new government had been formed in Paris by President Georges Pompidou on 6 April; Foreign Minister Maurice Schumann was replaced by Michel Jobert.[128] On 10 April Deputy Foreign Minister Qiao Guanhua privately suggested to Ambassador Manac'h in Peking that the time had come for France to address itself to the Cambodian question.[129] Paris announced on 12 April the official establishment of diplomatic relations with the DRV raising it

to full ambassadorial status; France was previously represented in Hanoi by a Delegate-General.[130]

Both superpowers, Zhou Enlai believed, appeared to make every effort to discredit the prince. A solution that isolated GRUNK in the long run might lead to a possible division of the Khmer resistance. The Soviets continued to refuse to recognise GRUNK and the Americans chose to ignore the upheavals in the interior.[131] As we have seen William Sullivan had said while in Paris in early March that the US did not intend to make contact with Sihanouk.

The quickening pace of Peking's involvement was indicated by a series of initiatives which began with the re-emergence on 12 April 1973 of Deng Xiaoping, former Vice-Premier and Secretary-General of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), stripped of his posts during the Cultural Revolution. Reemerging from obscurity, Deng was officially 'rehabilitated' and mentioned for the first time as 'Deputy Premier' on the occasion of Sihanouk's return to Peking from the maquis.[132] Zhou again endorsed Sihanouk's personal capacity as Head of State in his speech of welcome: GRUNK was the 'sole, legal government' of Cambodia. The prince's visit to the 'liberated zone' was a 'great victory' for the Cambodian people's struggle which would 'hasten the collapse' of the Lon Nol regime. The Premier also said 'if the USA agreed to stop interfering in the affairs of the Khmers, Cambodia would very quickly recover its traditional peace'. Sihanouk, in

his speech deliberately revealed that the Cambodian People's National Liberation Armed Forces (CPNLAF) was fighting 'absolutely alone' without the help of the North Vietnamese against Lon Nol's army and the US air force.[133]

Also at the banquet of 12 April Zhou personally approached Ambassador Manac'h to request his government to play a part in resolving the Cambodian problem and to 'give inspiration' to other countries in this respect.[134] The Premier said that France's long association with Cambodia made it well suited for a special role in which it might exert some leverage on Washington. Both the Chinese and the French saw Sihanouk as the incarnation of Cambodian neutrality and independence leading by mid-April, according to Manac'h, to a 'certain objective convergence' coming into being between Peking and Paris.[135]

On his return to Peking Sihanouk had made more allegations about US dismissal of his offers to talk. On 13 April he revealed that he had officially proposed to the US 'two months ago' that 'some contact' without preconditions be made with Washington on behalf of FUNK and GRUNK.[136] But Kissinger had made clear to Pham Van Dong and Zhou Enlai that Washington had 'no intention' to make contact with him. Negotiations with the US meant the ending of US interference in Cambodia. A ceasefire, under prevailing circumstances, Sihanouk said, would split Cambodia into two or more parts and entail recognition of the Lon Nol-controlled zone

which would dangerously prolong the war.[137] The prince would be making an official visit to the African states of Mali, the Congo, Guinea, Zambia and Senegal from the beginning of May; and he expressed the hope that Japan might recognise his government-in-exile before its 'final victory' over the Lon Nol regime.

These recriminations apart, events in and concerning Cambodia were taking place against a wider background of US-China dialogue. Since Kissinger's visit important exchanges between Washington and Peking had culminated in the establishment of the liaison offices. On 15 March 1973 Nixon nominated David Bruce - formerly US Ambassador to the Paris peace talks in 1970-71 - to head the US Liaison Office in Peking considering the envoy particularly well-placed in view of his long and distinguished diplomatic career.[138] Huang Zhen, China's Ambassador to France was named by Peking on 30 March to head the Chinese Liaison Office in Washington, having returned from Paris the same day.[139] Han Xu, Chief of Protocol of the Chinese Foreign Ministry was named his deputy. His appointment appeared to constitute the final link of a diplomatic chain which had developed between China, Japan and the US. Han Xu had visited Tokyo in January 1973 and later accompanied Foreign Minister Ji Pengfei to the Paris Conference. He was scheduled to visit Japan again

on 15 April en route to his post in Washington. That was to be followed by the epoch-making visit of Liao Chengzhi to Japan (15 April-18 May).

The decision to establish 'liaison missions' according to Alfred Jenkins, deputy to Ambassador Bruce in Peking, was 'one step away' from diplomatic relations. He attributed this on 21 March to a 'direct result' of the Vietnam settlement.[140] The US had been told in discussions with Chinese leaders since 1972, that there were 'three main hurdles' to a significant improvement of relations: the 'most urgent' was the ending of the Vietnam war; followed by the Taiwan issue; and lastly that of the continued US military presence in Asia.

Under the US-China dialogue, Kissinger responded from Washington to Zhou's unstinting support for the prince, and his condemnation of US bombing, with a 'sharp note' on 13 April expressing 'extreme disappointment'.[141] He stressed that it was the responsibility of 'all interested countries' to work for moderation to bring about a political solution that would give true neutrality and independence to Cambodia. A Chinese response on 16 April from Huang Hua, Ambassador at the UN, explained that Peking had done no more than restate previous positions in urging the US to end support of Lon Nol: its formulation was aimed 'at an individual, not a structure'.[142]

In Washington Kissinger was soon in contact with Han Xu after the latter's arrival on 19 April. In a message dated

24 April to Zhou Enlai he said the US wished to 'repeat its willingness' to see a settlement of the Cambodian problem which included all political forces including those of Sihanouk.[143] The US side was now prepared to undertake discussions with the Chinese side and looked forward to this objective either in Washington or Peking after the arrival in mid-May of David Bruce to head the US Liaison Office there.

Sihanouk warned on 19 April however that the leaders in the interior would never accept a compromise with the Phnom Penh 'clique' and it was completely illusory for the US, France or the Soviet Union to count on such a solution.[144] The prince had returned to Peking by 24 April where he referred in a meeting with Manac'h to a 'serious misunderstanding' on the part of the US Administration in its analysis of the Khmer problem.[145] Hanoi's principal objective, which alone justified its military intervention in Cambodia, was the conquest of Saigon. Washington believed erroneously that Khmer-Vietnamese cooperation existed. In fact the Khmer Rouge exercised complete autonomy and pledged themselves to a 'total victory'. The resistance, he warned on 28 April, were already positioned around Phnom Penh, intending to isolate it from the rest of the country, to let it fall like a 'ripe fruit'.[146] Only US airpower he admitted, prevented such an eventuality.

Meanwhile under mounting pressure from the US to broaden its political base, Marshal Lon Nol announced in Phnom

Penh on 17 April 1973 the resignation of Premier Hang Thun Hak and other members of the cabinet.[147] It was believed at the time that the visit (9-10 April) of Nixon's special envoy, Alexander Haig had done much to convince Lon Nol that only such a course could induce the insurgents to discuss a ceasefire and eventual peace. The resignation however had little practical significance. All real authority still rested with the Marshal.

By 23 April Lon Nol had reached a compromise formula for a new all-party Council to oversee the running of nation -al affairs. The executive leadership became a four-man coun -cil on 24 April under an agreement by which Lon Nol would share power equally with the three leading political opponents including In Tam, Sirik Matak and former Chief of State, Cheng Heng. The temporary departure on 30 April of Lon Non for an undefined mission to the US was also aimed at shoring up national confidence.

In the interim the US military role in Cambodia was increasingly questioned. On 19 April US air support for the war effort against the communists was alleged to be continuing from day to day 'without renewed goverment-to-government requests'. It apparently entailed the 'continuous cooperation of US and Cambodian military planners.[148] This was foll -owed by a direct contradiction of the Cambodian government position. Official US sources in Phnom Penh said on 20 April

that there had been 'no documented evidence' that Vietnamese communist troops were serving combat roles in Cambodia since the truce.[149] The statement also conflicted with the reason given previously by Defence Secretary Richardson for continued US bombing which was to force the DRV to honour Article 20. To paper over these contradictions the State Department said on 23 April that North Vietnamese forces were training and supplying anti-government insurgents in Cambodia and manning heavy weapons there.[150]

In this context previously secret Defence Department information was made public on 27 April by a Congressional report submitted by Lowenstein and Moose - who had made an inspection trip to Southeast Asia (28 March-19 April). Containing the first detailed official information about the extent and rate of American bombing in Cambodia, it confirmed that the preponderance of bombing had shifted since March 1973 from striking at North Vietnamese lines of communication to supporting Cambodian government forces.[151] An increase of bombing from mid-February until the end of March was directed at the interdiction of North Vietnamese supply routes in Eastern Cambodia leading into South Vietnam. By the first half of April however, the 'vast preponderance' of the B-52 strikes were aimed at the insurgent forces.'Stepped -up US air activity' had been justified on the grounds that the enemy effort could destroy the Lon Nol government. The US Embassy moreover was now directly involved in planning and approving the bombing.

In an accompanying statement, Senator Stuart Symington of Missouri, the Senate subcommittee chairman, said US bombing was devoted primarily to supporting Lon Nol. The report, he said, should correct the 'erroneous' impression that the fighting in Cambodia was between government forces and the North Vietnamese since the struggle was 'essentially a civil war' between opposing Khmer groups. The 'deep involvement' of the Embassy he felt, violated the 'clear intent' of Congressional amendments to limit the involvement of US personnel in Cambodia.[152]

On 30 April Secretary Rogers presented a State Department Memorandum to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, setting forth the basis of Presidental authority to continue bombing in Cambodia.[153] The conflicts in Cambodia and Laos, he said, were 'so interrelated' to the conflict in Vietnam as to be considered parts of 'a single conflict'. The importance of Article 20 could not be underestimated: it recognised these 'underlying connections' among the hostilities in all countries of Indochina and required the cessation of foreign armed intervention in Laos and Cambodia. The continuation of hostilities in the latter and the presence there of North Vietnamese troops, Rogers stressed, threatened the right of self-determination of South Vietnam as guaranteed by the Paris Agreement.

US air strikes in Cambodia therefore did not represent a commitment by the US to its defence but represented instead, a 'meaningful interim action' to bring about compliance with

Article 20. Unilateral cessation of US air combat activity in Cambodia without the removal of North Vietnamese forces, Rogers emphasised would ipso facto undermine the achievement of the accord and of Article 20.[154] The President's powers under the US Constitution were described as adequate to prevent such a self-defeating result.

The US had made clear to Hanoi, at the conclusion of the Paris talks, Rogers continued, that the armed forces of the Khmer government would suspend all offensive operations and that US aircraft supporting them would do likewise. If the other side had reciprocated, a de facto ceasefire would have been brought into force in Cambodia. US air forces need -ed to take 'necessary countermeasures' if communist forces attacked, and air strikes would continue to be carried out 'as necessary' until such time when a ceasefire could be brought about.

US critics argued that a 'fundamental new situation' had been created by the withdrawal of all US armed forces from South Vietnam with the return of its POW's. New authority henceforth must be sought by the President from Congress to carry out air strikes in Cambodia. The issue, according to Rogers, was whether the President's constitutional author -ity to continue action in Cambodia expired with the US with -drawal from Vietnam. The issue was also whether the President must 'automatically stop' this action without regard to

the consequences even though the Agreement was not being
155
implemented by the other side.

The principal argument that military actions in Vietnam and Cambodia were closely interrelated because of the indivi -sibility of conflict, would be extended in succeeding months to diplomatic moves which implied the indivisibility of peace.

NOTES

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5. The New York Times, 14 March 1973.

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7. Ibid., pp.317-318.

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10. HAK II, p.318.

11. Ibid., p.319.

12. The New York Times, 16 March 1973.

13. Tran Van Tra, op.cit., p.18.

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16. Cao Van Vien, op.cit., p.33.

17. Ibid., 30 March 1973.

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20. Ibid., 23 March 1973.

21. Thailand, Laos, Cambodia & Vietnam : April 1973, A Staff Report prepared for the use of the Subcommittee on US Security Agreements & Commitments Abroad, of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, US Senate, 11 June 1973; p.43.

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CHAPTER II : II

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25. Hung, op.cit., p.163.

26. President Thieu of the RVN visits the US, Text of Joint Communique, DSB, 30 April 1973; p.512.

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41. HAK II, pp.323-324.

42. Ibid.,

43. Ibid.,

44. The New York Times, 12 April 1973.

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46. The New York Times, 25 April 1973.

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63. Asahi Shimbun, 27 February 1973, in DSJP, 1 March 1973; p.13.

64. Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 28 February 1973, in DSJP, 1 March 1973; p.23.

65. Asahi Shimbun, 2 March 1973, in DSJP, 3-5 March 1973; p.13.

66. Sankei Shimbun, 9 March 1973, in DSJP, 10-12 March 1973 p.41.

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CHAPTER III

THE INDIVISIBILITY OF PEACE I

MAY - JUNE 1973

'..... there cannot be stable peace in Vietnam until its neighbours are at peace. The conflict has been indivisible. The peace must be too.'

Richard Nixon

3 May 1973*

* US Foreign Policy for the 1970's : Shaping a Durable Peace A Report to the Congress by Richard Nixon, 3 May 1973, in DSB, 4 June 1973; p.749.

III : I

VIETNAM

In the 'State of the World' message delivered to Congress on 3 May 1973, President Nixon affirmed that the Paris Agreement satisfied the US belief that a settlement in Vietnam should resolve only specific military questions. Thus the 'most feasible and rapid route' to peace was embodied in the final settlement.[1] The political provisions were 'general', requiring further negotiations between the two South Vietnamese parties, but laying the 'best obtainable foundation'

for beginning a process of self-determination. It was now up to the contending factions, Nixon said, to pursue their objectives through 'peaceful means' and 'political competition'.

In his fourth and strongest warning about the communist violations of the truce, he said Hanoi had two choices. The first was to violate the Agreement and press its military objectives in Indochina, continue to infiltrate men and material into South Vietnam, retain its forces in Laos and Cambodia and through pressure or outright attack renew its aggression against Saigon. All of this, Nixon said, would risk 'renewed confrontation' and destroy the chances of a new and constructive bilateral relationship with the US. The second course was for Hanoi to pursue its objectives peacefully and allow 'historical trends' in the region to 'assert themselves'. This meant observance of the accord and the removal of foreign forces on both sides from Laos and Cambodia. If Hanoi chose the peaceful option, years of military conflict in Indochina could be transformed into political struggle, enabling the US and the DRV to normalise relations.

By this time however, short of an all-out communist offensive, force was no longer a realistic option from Washington's point of view. The Administration had to find other ways of restraining Hanoi. One possibility was to employ the leverage of the major communist powers. 'Outside powers', Nixon emphasised, had a strong interest in the maintenance of peace in Indochina and could lend a moderating influence

to affairs there. With a negotiated settlement it was argued there could be no reasonable justification for sending Hanoi large arms shipments; and a military buildup there would raise questions about the motives of the suppliers. Nixon went on to underline the 'interdependence'of different world problems and to explain how a 'meaningful and lasting' impro-vement of Washington's relations with the Soviet Union and China was linked to the outcome of the Vietnam settlement.[2]

Kissinger would take the opportunity of his forthcoming visit to Moscow (4-9 May), formally intended to prepare for Brezhnev's June visit to the US, to conduct an exchange of views with the Soviet leadership on the situation in Indochina in 'all its aspects'. Kissinger later referred to the 'efforts' through which he hoped the US and the Soviet Union would combine to make an unparalleled contribution to establishing a global structure of peace, a process which was impeded by the persistent conflict in Indochina.[3]

When Kissinger returned from Moscow on 10 May it seemed both sides expected more rapid resolution in such areas as ending the renewed fighting in Indochina. The Soviet Union, he said, recognised its 'responsibilities' as a signatory at the Paris Conference not to encourage violations of the accord by supplying heavy arms shipments to Hanoi.[4] He himself would make a 'serious effort', in talks with Le Duc Tho due to start on 17 May in Paris, to bring about 'stricter implementation' of the Paris Agreement. It was disclosed later in the

month that Kissinger had obtained agreement in Moscow that both the US and the Soviet Union would restrict the flow of military supplies to their respective Vietnamese allies at 'current levels'. He also obtained a promise that Moscow would 'discourage' major new communist offensives in South Vietnam by warning Hanoi that the USSR could not be counted upon to replace weapons lost in that way.[5]

The Soviet Union seemed to a certain extent to share Washington's perspective. Soviet interest in detente with the US was indicated by the fact that Saigon rather than Washington was singled out on 11 May for condemnation as a force preventing the establishment of peace and stability in Vietnam, since its continued 'transgressions' of the ceasefire were described as a 'fundamental obstacle' to political normalisation in the country.[6] There was however little sign that the Soviet Union was prepared to take practical steps to curb all Hanoi's military operations; and on 14 May during Le Duc Tho's stopover in Moscow on the way to the Paris talks with Kissinger, Moscow reaffirmed its support for Hanoi's 'national aspirations'.[7] The April plenum of the CPSU Central Committee it added, had promised to facilitate 'in every way' the establishment of peace in the 'whole of Indochina'.

China by contrast, was explicitly urging Hanoi to show restraint. Before his arrival in Moscow, Le Duc Tho stopped

in Peking (11-12 May) where, according to Hoang Van Hoan, member of the Politburo of the VWP, he received the following advice from Zhou Enlai:

'We held peace talks with Chiang Kaishek after the Japanese surrender in 1945. In the first year Chairman Mao went to Chongqing personally for the talks. And in the second year the political consultative conference was convened, an armistice mediation group was set up. It was not until 1947 that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) began its counter-offensive and wiped out the Chiang Kaishek regime without a halt. Vietnam too, should win a spell of time to get prepared and when it begins to fight should eliminate the Nguyen Van Thieu administration without a halt. For after a period of armistice it would be difficult for the US to barge in.'[8]

There is a small amount of evidence that Hanoi may have been debating at this stage whether to take Chinese advice and scale down its military activity. Tran Van Tra lamented that there was as yet 'no upper echelon distribution plan' to transport and stockpile the supplies designated for B-2's use in 1974. These supplies were needed to enable the forces in B-2 to 'continue to take the initiative and develop strongly'.[9] Weapons and equipment earmarked for 1973 were, by contrast, being received and transported efficiently. This hiatus might suggest that a respite had been agreed on, at least, conceivably, till the end of the Kissinger-Tho talks or till later on in the year. Tra mentions attending a plenary

meeting of the Politburo in Hanoi in May after which he gave the problem attention but could find 'no solution'. Tra then consulted Dinh Duc Thien, head of the Rear Services General Department who agreed to lend him 2,000 tons of weapons 'in advance' from the total to be distributed to B-2 in 1974.

From Saigon outgoing US Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker said on 3 May in this connection that although fighting continued in South Vietnam, the number of large battles had fallen off sharply. Press reports in early May 1973 suggested that Hanoi was planning an offensive in the two northernmost provinces of South Vietnam in the next six to twelve months.[10] Only a series of 'true political compromises' between the communists and the Saigon government or a 'successful application of international pressure' on Hanoi could head off an assault. Activities such as the building of roads and airfields to move supplies which greatly enhanced the Viet Cong's military capability had been surmised as intended for a major attack. By mid-May the likelihood of a major North Vietnamese offensive in the foreseeable future was believed to be diminishing as the communists appeared to concentrate on political activity instead.

En route to Paris in mid-May, Kissinger received an intelligence report that a 'general offensive' had been in preparation but was being 'postponed' to give Watergate an

opportunity to complete the paralysis of the Nixon presidency and the demoralisation of Saigon.[11] The report, Kissinger said, confirmed the US' knowledge of Hanoi's buildup and also 'accurately predicted' that Nixon now lacked authority to retaliate against North Vietnamese transgressions.

On the eve of the Paris talks the Viet Cong accused the US of bombing inside North or South Vietnam for the first time since the Paris Agreement. The US Air Force and the Saigon Government had 'repeatedly' bombed the 'liberated areas' of Tay Ninh and Binh Long between 2 and 9 May. Liberation Radio linked this move to Kissinger's warning on 12 May that 'punitive and motivating actions' must be taken to ensure respect for the Paris Agreement.[12]

On 14 May Le Duc Tho reiterated the Viet Cong's charge on arrival in Paris and warned that the talks would be cancelled if the raids continued.[13] He would meet Kissinger on one condition, this being a halt to what he termed 'direct US violation' of the ceasefire by the bombing on 9 May of Loc Ninh. In Washington a Pentagon spokesman said the US was not conducting any air combat operations over South Vietnam, and discounted the possibility that the bombing in Cambodia could have accidentally taken place in South Vietnam.[14] The ICCS in any event voted unanimously in Saigon on 14 May to investigate communist charges that the US had resumed bombing in South Vietnam.

Kissinger did not expect his talks with Le Duc Tho to result in substantial changes to the Paris Agreement since they concerned 'methods of implementation' rather than 'renegotiations'.[15] This was corroborated by Ambassador Bunker in Saigon telling President Thieu in mid-May of American plans to negotiate with Hanoi for 'strict implementation' of the Agreement.[16] In Paris Kissinger's first round of meetings with Le Duc Tho (17-23 May) were apparently conducted in a 'constructive and positive manner'. Press reports suggested Kissinger's concern centred on :

One, the inadequate implementation of the ceasefire; Two, the continued infiltration into South Vietnam and the continued utilisation of Laos and Cambodia as corridors for that infiltration; Three, the inadequate accounting for the missing-in-action; Four, the violations of the DMZ; Five, the inadequate cooperation with the ICCS and the slow staffing of the Two-Party JMC; Six, particular concern about the violations of Article 20 which had required the withdrawal of foreign troops from Laos and Cambodia.[17]

There was no sign at the end of the talks however that any of these basic positions had shifted although 'significant progress' was said to have been made. Politically the South Vietnamese insisted that the two parties discuss how elections would be run and what offices would be contested before a NCNRC was formed and elections had taken place.

Meanwhile the 9th, 10th and 11th sessions of the La Celle-St Cloud political talks, held on 3, 9 and 17 May, had again failed to reach any compromise.[18] Each side continued to accuse the other of failing to understand its respective positions. Militarily almost every aspect of the zones of control was in dispute. One fundamental problem was Saigon's desire to allow only military control as opposed to the Viet Cong's insistence on political control as well.

The South Vietnamese interpretation of the Paris talks needs to be taken into account. Kissinger, according to Nguyen Tien Hung, 'presided' over a final and fatal set of political and military concessions that would undermine South Vietnam's ability to survive. Nixon's 'political vulnerability' on account of Watergate caused Kissinger to be 'most concerned' with his own survival and he returned to Paris seeking a ceasefire in Cambodia while 'papering over' the differences between Hanoi and Saigon.[19]

The failure of Kissinger's strategy, Hung explained, rested in 'two sets of problems'. By now Kissinger's secret diplomacy was no longer backed by the use or credible threat of force. Originally US strategy was to bomb North Vietnam for a month before the talks began but Watergate hindered any response to Hanoi's ceasefire violations. On account of Nixon's draining power and because he could no longer use

force against Hanoi, Kissinger exerted greater pressure on Saigon.[20] The relationship between Washington and Saigon accordingly deteriorated.

Nguyen Van Thieu did not believe negotiations could end the war. Prepared to continue fighting with US support, he wanted to maintain an armed truce and consolidate the economic and political structure of the South. As long as North Vietnamese troops remained in the South Thieu could not envisage sharing power with the PRG.[21] Most critically Thieu wanted added to the communique references to the presence of Hanoi's troops in the South, which the original accord did not contain. He wanted a serious ceasefire to 'remain in place' and an immediate delimitation of the areas of control by each side. Another point of contention was the NCNRC which Thieu insisted must arrange for formal elections only if it was tied to a firm date. It would discuss elections and the nature of the body to be elected, as insurance against the latter evolving into a three-way coalition government without elections.[22]

On his departure from Paris Kissinger said he would report to Nixon in Washington, returning to Paris for a second round of talks, beginning on 6 June. Kissinger's attempts to extract concessions from Tho were combined in the interim with an exertion of US pressure on the Saigon regime. On 22 May Assistant Secretary of State William

Sullivan left Paris for Saigon on a sudden and unexplained visit, presumed at the time to seek Thieu's approval of points on which Kissinger and Tho might agree.[23] We now know that Nixon had written to Thieu on 21 May 1973 sending Sullivan to Saigon to personally deliver the letter and bring Thieu a copy of the new draft communique.[24] Nixon explained that Kissinger was in Paris to negotiate with Hanoi for 'an improved implementation' and that a joint communique might be issued on 25 May between Washington and Hanoi. He also reiterated the 'impossibility' of convening a four-party conference as Thieu suggested and did not speak of the use of force against Hanoi. Nixon warned Thieu however against backing away from his commitment to the Paris Agreement as expressed in San Clemente and on the need to sign the communique if he wanted continued economic aid.

Intensive discussions in Saigon between Sullivan and Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam (24-26 May) were thought to have covered technical details of an eleven-point plan to end the ceasefire violations. These included the establishment of distinct zones of control in South Vietnam with new orders for all troops to ceasefire.[25] It also covered the possibility of meetings between communists at the front and the means of guaranteeing freedom of movement to ICCS members and the creation of the NCNRC, to organise countrywide

elections. While the substance of the talks was not revealed Sullivan was reportedly attempting to move Saigon towards compromise on these issues. Sullivan later described his impressions in Saigon as follows:

'Essentially what is dawning on them is that a territorial division of the country, even if it means a PRG retreat from the political contest, is a pretty definitive action. If, as they fear, it may be coupled with a communist-controlled Cambodia, they realise this could lead to a military balance in which they have precious narrow patrimony ...'[26]

Hung discloses however that Thieu refused to accept or sign the new communique drafted in Paris and informed Nixon that a 'series of changes' would be needed before he would concur. 'Most onerous' to Thieu was Kissinger's concession to Le Duc Tho on the right of military movement across the DMZ which Thieu considered 'sacrosanct'. From Saigon the Kissinger-Tho talks smacked of a secret deal between the two protagonists. Thieu 'could not understand' why Kissinger was giving away the DMZ to Tho. Kissinger, he suspected, might have persuaded the North Vietnamese to sign the accord in January 1973 on the premise that 'outstanding issues' could be renegotiated in the spring.[27]

On its part Saigon appeared receptive to putting out new ceasefire orders to extend its cooperation with the ICCS and offered on 26 May a truce implementation plan.[28] This would

delineate zones of control and provide for 'negotiations' on where each side stood on 28 January 1973, the day of the ceasefire. But it was immediately rejected by the Viet Cong. Saigon stood firm however on the zones and the Council and urged Sullivan to get the North Vietnamese to agree, at least on principle, to withdraw their troops. But it had little hope of achieving this. A timetable suggested for carrying out the ceasefire was also dismissed as unrealistic in view of the vast differences between the two sides. Instead Sullivan urged Saigon to be more conciliatory to the Viet Cong. Sullivan's departure on 26 May would take him to Phnom Penh, Vientiane and Bangkok to brief the respective governments on current efforts to bring peace to Indochina before he returned to Washington.

Back in Washington, Kissinger warned on 29 May that a great deal depended on whether the 'new understandings' would be implemented. The lack of implementation he said was not necessarily a lack of clarity of the old Agreement but the 'lack of willingness' to observe provisions that were clearly understood. A 'major effort' he emphasised had been made to have the truce implemented.[29] On 30 May Nixon wrote to Thieu again. Kissinger, he said, had been instructed to seek agreement to a 'number of proposals' Thieu had made. However even if the changes were not accepted by the North Vietnamese, Thieu should sign the document as it was 'use-

ful to both of us' and designate his representative to do so, possibly on 8 June in Paris.[30] Nixon explained that he needed action of this kind if he was to obtain from Congress 'legislative cooperation' required to carry out the 'programmes of peace and stability' discussed in San Clemente.

From Saigon it was reported simultaneously on 30 May that the US and the DRV had decided to issue a communique on the ceasefire after the resumption of the Paris talks on 6 June 'with or without the concurrence of their partners'.[31] Kissinger and Tho had apparently agreed on a 'sequence of steps' intended to ensure a 'stricter implementation' of the ceasefire in South Vietnam and attention would focus on essential aspects of the Agreement.[32] The steps envisaged with Hanoi were that the US would halt all air reconnaissance missions over North Vietnam and would resume minesweeping operations and economic aid talks suspended on 19 April. On the ground, 24 hours after the announcement, the Saigon Government and the Viet Cong would order the opposing battlefield commanders to ceasefire; five to ten days later they would issue guarantees of privilege and immunity for members of the Two-Party JMC and fully deploy observers in the field to keep the peace. Within three months the zones of control would be delineated and military commanders from both sides could meet to establish safety corridors for representatives of one side travelling through areas controlled by the other the DMZ would be

respected and troops and military equipment would be withdrawn from the buffer zone and forces on both sides would be demobilised; legitimate ports of entry would be established for the replacement of war material by each side on a one-to-one basis and the remaining Vietnamese POW's would be released. Politically the NCNRC and an election procedure would be set up 'within six months' to shape the political future of South Vietnam under the terms of the original agreement.

In Saigon US Chargé d'Affaires Charles Whitehouse on 31 May provided Thieu with 'precise details' of the US proposals in Paris.[33] Referring to the DMZ it was proposed that the last sentence of paragraph 4(B) be broken to read:

'In conformity with Article 15, the DMZ shall be respec -ted. Military equipment may transit the demilitarised zone only if introduced into South Vietnam as replacements pursuant to Article 7 of the Agreement and through a designated point of entry.'

Article 7 was also to be rewritten to reintroduce a reference to elections which the RVN considered essential. Article 8 would include the delimitation of the areas of control as 'determined in conformity' with Article 3(B) of the Agreement.

Saigon made no secret of its resentment at this pressure. On 2 June Thieu wrote to Nixon giving 'renewed objections' and requested a copy of the latest version of the draft

agreement.[34] Two elements were of particular concern to Thieu: the first was his wish to have a specific reference to the electoral process in the communique and the second was the communist effort to give 'geographical substance' to their political pretensions by describing their 'territory' and their 'capital'. In a telegramme on 5 June Nixon assured Thieu that a sentence had been included on elections and that the territorial question was 'much vaguer' than in the previous draft.[35] Nixon wanted Thieu's concurrence that the joint communique be signed on 7 and 8 June in Paris in the format 'agreed between our two governments'. Attached to Nixon's letter was the text of the draft Joint Communique (Appendix II).[36] Among issues Thieu did not want to renegotiate were the DMZ, North Vietnamese infiltration, the issue of infiltration after 28 January 1973, the Cambodian and Lao ceasefire and elections. The North Vietnamese, Thieu believed had additionally gained from the June Joint Communique since there were no constraints to their crossing the DMZ and to their stationing of troops at the delimitation of the two territories. The question of elections had also become less clear.[37]

On 6 June Thieu wrote to Nixon complaining that the RVN was a 'victim of aggression'. Instead of being punished for violating a solemn agreement, Hanoi, enjoying unilaterally 'all the gains of the communique' was only being asked to

sign another one.[38] Nixon's reply the same day was emphatic that the communique must be viewed as 'final' and was not subject to further revisions. Nixon said Thieu must sign the communique 'as it currently exists, despite the minor misgivings'[39] or else face the 'inevitably disastrous consequences'.

By 7 June Nixon was determined to proceed without Thieu. 'All your views', he told Thieu, had been taken into account and the 'best consideration' of them possible 'favourable to your interests' had been achieved in the document. Kissinger had been given instructions to propose to Le Duc Tho that they should sign the text of the communique 'as it now stands'.[40] Thieu's intransigence, Nixon added, would be blamed for thwarting 'any realistic prospect' for an agreement on Cambodia since his position deprived the North Vietnamese of 'any possible motive to achieve an understanding with us on this key issue'.

Thieu however remained adamant. On 8 June he informed Nixon that he favoured a formula whereby the US and North Vietnam would approve the communique and call on the RVN and the PRG to carry out its provisions.[41] Nixon was unimpressed, 'unlike October (1972)', he replied, 'we will oppose and not back your action'.[42] Senate and House conferees, he warned, would be voting on 11 June on an absolute prohibition of funds for military operations in and over Cambodia and Laos. Saigon's failure to sign would lead therefore to a 'sequence of

events' which could only be disastrous for the RVN Government. By the same token Nixon needed Thieu's reply in time for him to instruct his negotiators in Paris to proceed on 9 June.

In Paris meanwhile, Washington's efforts to reason with Hanoi culminated on 6-9 June and 12-13 June in the second and third sessions of the 1973 talks. Intended ostensibly to arrive at a new understanding on implementing the cease-fire and to deal with the points at issue, 'Nothing new or spectacular', Kissinger publicly said, had been added. A series of procedures to put into effect more satisfactorily what had already been agreed upon was said to have surfaced in the document. The talks were broken off in mid-session on 9 June in an attempt, as Kissinger put it, to bring the Vietnamese parties to a 'common realisation of the significance of certain words'.[43]

We now know that Thieu had informed Chargé Whitehouse in Saigon that he would meet with his National Security Council on 9 June to reply to Nixon's letter. Immediately informed, Nixon rushed another message to Thieu to force him to sign.[44] The communique, Nixon informed Thieu in confidence, was intended to 'buy time' for the US: an arrangement concerning Laos - where the withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops over 60 days would begin on 1 July - and a 'complex three-cornered negotiation' on Cambodia were concurrently taking place.

Thieu replied again insisting that the changes be made in

the communique before he would sign it. On 10 June Whitehouse gave Thieu Nixon's answer which said the changes he requested had been rejected in a 'long and acrimonious session' by the North Vietnamese. A 'forty-eight hour delay' had been arranged moreover during which Kissinger would return to Washington for consultations. A talking paper was also enclosed with detailed answers to Thieu's concerns regarding particularly the delimitation of the zones of control.[45] On Nixon's instructions Kissinger would return to Paris on 12 June to sign the communique since 'we are now at a point where no further delay is possible'. Asking Thieu to reconsider his position, Nixon referred to the restraint he hoped to impose on Chinese and Soviet support to North Vietnam. If the US and South Vietnam were 'split by a public confrontation', he warned, international support for Thieu's position would also weaken and the economic advisory group that the US had been trying to mobilise among friendly nations to aid South Vietnam might also be jeopardised.[46]

Thieu's reply to Nixon on 12 June complained that the communique Kissinger had negotiated would produce in effect 'two territories under two governments in South Vietnam'.[47] On 13 June Nixon warned Thieu that his refusal to sign had 'repudiated my entire policy of constant support for you'. Nixon would be forced to follow Congressional opinion by supporting 'only marginal humanitarian necessities' and Thi-

eu would have to forego all the 'hard decisions and tasks' involving the military and economic programmes described in San Clemente. By the same token Nixon had ordered Kissinger and Nguyen Luu Vien in Paris to sign as 'no further delay or evasion was acceptable'.[48]

The Joint Communique issued in Paris on 13 June was described as an 'amplification and consolidation of the original agreement'.[49] All parties, Kissinger said, would have to accept the overwhelming reality that no-one could have his way in Vietnam by force. The new ceasefire was expected to go into effect on 15 June. The points of principal concern were embodied in the prohibitions against the infiltration of personnel and material into South Vietnam, except as replacements under Article 7 of the original agreement. The prohibitions against transiting the DMZ were stressed. The Communique, containing 14 points, emphasised Articles 3, 7, 8 and 11 of the original agreement, representing the clauses virtually phrase by phrase (See Appendix II). Particular emphasis was placed on Article 7 and the duties of the JMC and the ICCS, repeated without amendments, were to commence 24 hours after the new ceasefire came into force.

The basic framework of the Paris Agreement remained untouched and the essential points of the draft agreement followed the 'sequence of steps' outlined earlier, with shorter deadlines than those defined in January. There were no mechanisms

to enforce the ceasefire, and the structure of the Agreement with its essential problems therefore remained intact. What is not known was whether the document was only a convenient cloak for more significant secret understandings reached by Kissinger and Tho in their Paris negotiations. Kissinger was cynical. There was little likelihood that the new version would be adhered to since the existing accord was not. In any case he had made observance on the ban on infiltration dependent on the achievement of an effective ceasefire, which Hanoi, according to Kissinger, was making it its business to sabotage.

Taken to task for Hanoi's infiltration and non-adherence to Article 7, Tho had defended himself in Paris by saying the ceasefire violations were 'secondary issues'.[50] We now know that in June 1973 the Military Commission of the Party Central Committee issued in Hanoi a resolution on the 'important new situation and missions' which analysed developments after the Paris Agreement, and possible developments afterwards to set out the military guidelines, missions and major policies concerning both the North and South. The Politburo also met with the Party committee secretaries and military commanders in June to discuss the drafting of its report to the Party Central Committee.[51]

Kissinger's anxiety to conclude the Paris talks was related also to a desire to devote his full attention to Brezhnev's imm-

inent visit (18-25 June) to the US, which would mark the 'completion' of a period of bilateral agreements. Central to these was the idea of the 'structure of peace' that all countries had a stake in the preservation of the international order. Reference to China and Indochina in the Joint Communique issued in San Clemente on 25 June 1973 was embodied in the pledge that the US and the USSR 'refrain from threatening the use of force against each other, against the allies of the other party or against other countries'.[52] This was a clear restriction against the use of military targets and would seem to have some relevance in Indochina.

While the pledge seemed applicable to Vietnam, the situation in Cambodia still appeared mid-year to be in disarray. The Paris talks achieved nothing substantial that might alleviate the deteriorating situation there.

III : II

CAMBODIA

'... the war in Cambodia has always been a product of the struggle in Vietnam.'

William Rogers

8 May 1973

The controversy over the bombing of Cambodia and the funds required for it, continued to plague the Nixon Admin-

istration throughout May 1973. The House Appropriations Committee defeated a bid on 3 May to deny funds for the bombing of Cambodia. On 7 May Defence Secretary Elliot Richardson told the Senate Appropriations Committee that the bombing would continue even if Congress refused to provide the Pentagon with additional spending authority.

The question of how to end the war in Cambodia was posed by Secretary of State William Rogers on 8 May with specific reference to US objectives there.[53] In hearings before a Senate Committee for Appropriations, he said the US could not unilaterally end the war by terminating its bombing of the country; when it had done so ten weeks ago the North Vietnamese and Khmer insurgents had responded by launching a major offensive. The choice for the US, Rogers said, was whether to allow a military takeover of Cambodia by the DRV and its allies or insist upon observation of a negotiated peace. The bombing in Cambodia was intended to bring about a ceasefire that would allow implementation of the Agreement.

The bill which the Committee was considering that day Rogers said, was not an 'open-ended commitment' to prolong the war but a request for funds until the end of the fiscal year. The Paris Agreement had provided a 'mutually acceptable' framework for such a lasting peace. A period of adjustment was necessary since the overall objective was to help Indochina turn away from confrontation and toward the common

tasks of economic development and political cooperation. New relationships 'still fragile' he said, were developing in Asia, which could provide the basis for longterm stability. The transition to stability was a 'delicate process' to which a sudden reduction in the US commitment might sacrifice the progress already achieved.[54]

On 10 May the House of Representatives voted 219:188 to block the transfer of defence funds - for the first time in six years - to finance the continued bombing in Cambodia. The White House response was to emphasise that it would continue nevertheless with the 'right policy' of bombing in support of the Lon Nol Government. On 14 May the Nixon Administration was further set back by two moves in the Senate to bar funds for the bombing. One move denied a Defence Department request to pay for continued bombing by the transfer of funds previously provided for other than operational purposes such as the procurement of weapons. The other, the Case-Church amendment, to cut off the use of any funds for military actions in Indochina that Congress had not specifically authorised, would if enacted, have a more binding effect on the executive branch.[55]

The US was simultaneously using an assortment of diplomatic channels to negotiate an end to the Cambodian war. Kissinger believed that an 'evolutionary process' could be set in motion in the course of his talks to be held in Paris with Le Duc Tho.[56] Some attention was given to the possi-

bility of bringing about a Cambodian ceasefire but Hanoi was not helpful. Kissinger's recommendation of a 'joint ceasefire' by both Cambodian parties was rejected.[57] As in February, Tho insisted on a political settlement before the arrangement of a troop withdrawal and before the implementation of Article 20. He refused to discuss a political solution for Cambodia, out of deference to the 'sovereignty' of his allies: the Khmer Rouge being 'adamantly opposed' to negotiations. The only political solution envisaged by Tho was the elimination of Lon Nol and a complete communist takeover, a definition of Cambodian neutrality and independence which to Kissinger implied North Vietnamese 'hegemony'.

Other avenues had to be sought towards a solution in Cambodia. One possibility was direct negotiations with Norodom Sihanouk. Rebuffed previously, the prince had been touring a series of African and Eastern European countries since the beginning of May, to enlist the support of friendly governments to mediate with Washington on his behalf. In the process he himself made a number of explicit overtures to the US. In Dakar, Senegal (11-13 May) he advanced a proposal for negotiations between 'two governments of sovereign and equal states' to lead to a 'peace with neither victor nor vanquished'.[58] His kingdom would become reconciled with the US on condition that it stopped giving military aid to the Lon Nol regime and withdrew all non-Khmer milit-

ary personnel from Cambodian territory. Anxious that Kissinger and Tho might reach an agreement on Cambodia in Paris over his head, Sihanouk insisted on 18 May in Bamako, Mali, that Hanoi had 'no right' to interfere in Cambodian internal affairs. Washington, if it 'sincerely' wanted to solve the question of Cambodia, should contact him.[59]

Kissinger seemed sufficiently interested to raise the question of negotiations with Sihanouk in his mid-May negotiations with Le Duc Tho; but Tho was again unresponsive: partly Kissinger thought because he felt he 'could not deliver the Khmer Rouge' and partly because Tho considered Sihanouk to be too much under Chinese influence.[60]

China remained a key factor in any solution. In a conversation in Peking with Ambassador Manac'h on 14 May, Zhou voiced his doubts about American readiness to withdraw from Cambodia. The US, he thought, feared that its retreat from Indo-china would create a vacuum which the Soviet Union might fill.[61] The only solution as Zhou saw it was the 'full implementation' of Article 20 and subsidiary clauses by all parties concerned, including particularly the withdrawal of 'all forces' after the achievement of a ceasefire. However the prospect of Chinese intervention on the Cambodian question alongside the US was 'not great'. On 18 May Zhou told David Bruce, the newly-arrived Head of the US Liaison Office that Peking was ready to cooperate up to a point, being particularly anxious that North

Vietnamese forces vacate Cambodian territory.[62] The question of Cambodia should be pursued under the auspices of the US-China dialogue through the mediation of Huang Zhen, who had just been designated Bruce's counterpart in Washington and was due to leave for the US to take up his new appointment on 25 May 1973.

To complicate matters, an attempt was underway in Phnom Penh to bring about a political compromise in the form of a transitional government. In Tam, a member of the High Political Council was named Premier-Designate on 11 May. Opposition leader Cheng Heng however would have preferred former deputy Premier, Son Sann, long resident in France and also a friend of Penn Nouth. Although Son Sann judged it premature to seek a solution that excluded Sihanouk, the prince was not to play any part in the proposed government.

Contact with Son Sann was made through the agency of a French official in Paris from 24 April onwards after which he set out for Phnom Penh by 14 May.[63] Once arrived in Cambodia Son Sann called for a largescale popular movement to bring about reconciliation between different factions of Khmers to prevent Cambodia from swinging towards communism. Encouraged by these activities, Sum Chhum, Minister of Information declared that 'contacts' had commenced between his government and the Sihanouk 'insurgents'.[64]

Son Sann left Phnom Penh on 30 May for Paris to try to

bring about peace talks with Sihanouk's government-in-exile. His departure was the 'first step' in a new effort by the Lon Nol Government to find a peaceful settlement. The Marshal was believed to have agreed in principle - at the request of William Sullivan who visited Phnom Penh on 26 May - to negotiate directly with the Sihanouk faction.[65] Sullivan who had previously briefed Thieu (24-26 May) on the Paris talks, had apparently presented Lon Nol with a plan to end the fighting in Cambodia to shore up the Paris Agreement. The Marshal was unresponsive. Neither Penn Nouth nor the Khmer Rouge had agreed to the talks and nothing was forthcoming from the latter. Son Sann said on arrival in Paris on 31 May that he would not personally participate in the talks even if he succeeded in bringing the two sides together for negotiations.[66]

On 1 June while on a visit to Algiers, Sihanouk condemned Son Sann as a 'triple agent' in the service of Lon Nol and of 'international and US imperialism'.[67] In early June Penn Nouth appealed from Peking to the Khmer population to 'reject all the intrigues' which comprise the 'so-called peace' pronounced by the 'clique of traitors', dialogue with whom was tantamount to a defence of US bombing.[68]

Back in New York on 27 May, after his first round of talks with Tho, Kissinger informed Huang Hua, China's Ambassa-

dor at the UN that he believed Chinese and American interests to be 'compatible'.[69] Both, he thought, sought to prevent the ultimate emergence of an Indochina under Hanoi's tutelage and aligned to Moscow. With specific regard to Cambodia, Kissinger submitted the following proposal to Huang Hua: Washington was prepared to stop the bombing of Cambodia to withdraw its 'advisory' group from the country and to arrange the departure of Lon Nol for medical treatment in the US. In exchange Washington would expect a ceasefire for a duration of say, 90 days and the parallel holding of negotiations on two levels: between the Sihanouk faction and the Lon Nol forces 'without Lon Nol', and between the staff of Sihanouk and David Bruce in Peking.[70] These negotiations were expected to take 'some months', on account of US 'necessities', a probable reference to US interests in Cambodia. Once completed Washington would not oppose the return of the prince to his homeland.

Huang Hua's response was guarded. This proposal he thought, could incur Hanoi's displeasure although the North Vietnamese might not be able to oppose it.[71] In subsequent reference to Sino-US designs on Cambodia, Hanoi alleged :

'After the Paris Agreement on Vietnam, the Chinese leaders and the Americans sought to arrange a political settlement in Kampuchea through an alliance between Sihanouk, Lon Nol and Son Sann. Kissinger himself related that in late May

1973, the Chinese leaders accepted the American proposal of a package for Kampuchea, comprising termination of US bombing, departure of Lon Nol, a ceasefire in Cambodia and negotiations between Lon Nol and the other side.'[72]

On 29 May Kissinger repeated his proposal to Huang Zhen in Washington. Huang Zhen made a further reservation. Zhou, he reminded Kissinger, had intimated to Bruce that both Sihanand the Khmer Rouge were willing in principle to talk to the US and China should defer to the Cambodian parties.[73] To underline the importance of the US-China dialogue, Nixon met Huang Zhen on 30 May. Nixon then left for the Franco-American talks at Reykjavik (31 May-1 June) with President Pompidou and Foreign Minister Michel Jobert. Where Cambodia was concerned, Pompidou apparently found Nixon and Kissinger 'vague', although the latter was later described by Jobert as being disposed towards accepting Sihanouk as an 'interlocutor'.[74]

But Washington was fast losing its ability to sustain a military effort in Cambodia, just as it had already done in Vietnam. On 22 May the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted to slash the Administration's military assistance funds by more than 40%. In the first absolute anti-war prohibition voted by either house of Congress, the Senate on 31 May voted 63:19 to cut off all funds for the bombing of Cambodia. On 4 June 1973 the Senate approved the Case-

Church amendment to cut off all funds for military operations in Indochina as a whole.

Coupled with these developments, Kissinger appeared to have reached the conclusion by the beginning of June that the Chinese were prepared to act as intermediaries in the Cambodian negotiations. But the Chinese were by no means so eager to come forward. Unfortunately a gulf still divided the GRUNK and US positions. Confident of Chinese mediation, Kissinger was unprepared to abandon his insistence on the need for a ceasefire before negotiations with the prince could take place and for a transitional period of several months before he could return to Cambodia. The result was that a continuing series of overtures from Sihanouk was rejected in Washington. 'Apparently oblivious', as Kissinger complained, 'of my talks with the Chinese', Sihanouk offered to meet him in messages relayed on 3-4 June by the Presidents of Guinea and Senegal as well as the King of Morocco.[75]

Peking was, however, quite as anxious as Washington to hold back the North Vietnamese. China played host to Le Duan and Pham Van Dong from 4-11 June, the first time that these two leaders had apparently visited Peking together. The difference of outlook between Peking and Hanoi was clear. Le Duan blamed the violations of the Paris Agreement on both Saigon and Washington. Zhou Enlai however confined his criticisms to Saigon alone.[76] He demanded the US stop bombing Cam-

bodia and end its other military activities there adding that 'no interference' in Indochina, 'under whatever pretext and in whatever form would be tolerated'.[77]

Cambodia was a crucial part of the Sino-Vietnamese discussions which opened on 5 June in Peking; just before the second session of the Paris talks. Speaking less than a month after the opening of the US Liaison Office in Peking, Zhou pointedly emphasised that Indochina 'belongs only' to the Indochinese people and that it was 'up to them' to decide the destiny of Indochina. The 'only solution' to the Cambodian problem was the prince and his 'Five-Point' statement of 1970.[78]

GRUNK certainly shared this view. Penn Nouth who met Manac'h on 3 June confirmed that GRUNK would not accept negotiations with the Americans.[79] GRUNK's premier had been obliged to delay his departure to join Sihanouk on his overseas tour on account of the imminent arrival of the Hanoi delegation. In talks with them on 5 June he was able to extract a useful disclaimer from the North Vietnamese. Le Duan and Pham Van Dong asked him to assure the prince that the DRV would 'never allow itself' to discuss the Cambodian problem in GRUNK's stead and that a solution rested on the US talking directly with Norodom Sihanouk.[80]

By this time the Chinese had emerged as overt partisans of direct negotiations with Sihanouk. On the day of the DRV delegation's arrival in Peking, 4 June 1973, important Sino-

American exchanges were taking place. Huang Zhen, having arrived in Washington to head the Chinese Liaison Office met William Rogers that day.[81] In New York Huang Hua requested a meeting with Kissinger the same day.[82] He delivered a message expressing China's disappointment with what he termed the 'tentative US thinking' on the Cambodian question. The Chinese message stressed that 'all parties concerned' - by implication Hanoi and probably Washington too - needed to respect Cambodia's sovereignty. Huang Hua emphasised in particular that Peking 'could not' conduct talks with the US on behalf of Cambodia and that direct talks with Sihanouk would be 'necessary' at some stage. China was however prepared to communicate with the Cambodian side, although it would have to await Sihanouk's return from his African and eastern European tour - since contact with the prince through diplomatic channels was currently 'inconvenient'.

This latter undertaking seems to have reinforced Kissinger's conviction that the Chinese were prepared to act as intermediaries on the Cambodian issue. This in turn persuaded him that Zhou was in fact committing himself to the US proposal since the Chinese Premier would not be willing to act as intermediary 'unless he expected to succeed'.[83] And such a commitment on the Chinese part appeared, on the surface, to guarantee a satisfactory settlement of the war. A ceasefire on this basis, reflecting the military balance,would deny the

Khmer Rouge the total victory they demanded. It would preserve the structure of 'free Cambodia' and enable Sihanouk to return with the support of both the US and China, in the capacity of arbiter between the divergent factions. The US bombing of Cambodia Kissinger thought might even be used as a 'bargaining chip' for the Chinese to enforce the settlement on both the Khmer Rouge and Hanoi.

As we have seen, Sihanouk's attempts in early June to contact Nixon through 'third countries' were rejected by the US. On 11 June the State Department confirmed its rejection on the grounds that 'the Cambodian people themselves' should negotiate to resolve their differences without outside interference.[84] The State Department moreover said Sihanouk had misinterpreted US intentions with his plan to end the war with 'neither victor nor vanquished' and by his response to the US asking him to negotiate with Phnom Penh. Sihanouk dispelled these assertions on 14 June while in Yugoslavia.[85]

With GRUNK so unforthcoming little could be expected on Cambodia from the next round of Paris talks with Hanoi (6-9, 12-13 June). Tho maintained once again that Hanoi had little influence over its Cambodian ally and rejected the US proposal for a joint ceasefire. The Joint Communique on 13 June contained no solution for Cambodia and no obligation on Washington to halt the bombing or to reduce its presence

there. All that emerged was a 'joint reaffirmation' of the need for the Cambodian people to settle their own problems and for foreign troops to withdraw from their territory.[86]

The new document insisted that Article 20 be 'scrupulously implemented' meaning that foreign military activity could continue in Cambodia until a ceasefire was negotiated by the Cambodians and was, to all intents and purposes, the justification for continued American bombing. One of Kissinger's priorities in Paris was to get some assurance from Hanoi through Le Duc Tho that he would use his influence with the Khmer Rouge to make a political deal and thereby end the need for bombing. There was nothing in the communique therefore that committed the US to cease such operations. As Kissinger himself reiterated in Paris on 13 June, he hoped to continue 'diplomatic contacts' that would produce a ceasefire in Cambodia but 'final results' depended on the decisions of 'other parties'.[87]

Kissinger meanwhile was bent upon continuing his dialogue with the Chinese. He had taken the opportunity in Paris on 13 June to arrange an 'unscheduled meeting' at the Chinese Embassy to meet Foreign Minister Ji Pengfei who was on a tour of Britain, France and Iran.[88] On this occasion Kissinger expressed his full agreement with the Chinese about Sihanouk's ultimate role as the Cambodian head of state. There must, he insisted, be a 'transitional period' of several months

before the prince could return to Cambodia. Kissinger was also adamant about the ceasefire which was central to his position of 27 May. He promised that Washington would make a gesture towards Sihanouk as soon as this was brought about.

Probably unknown to Kissinger, Ji Pengfei's Paris visit now gave further impetus to the French initiative on Cambodia: Pompidou also met Ji on 13 June and was pleased to know the 'exact position' of the Chinese vis-à-vis Sihanouk. A visit by Manac'h to the Quai d'Orsay on 14 June saw Michel Jobert assuring him that it was particularly vital that the voice of France was 'not entirely absent' since Paris was sympathetic towards the prince.[89]

A Congressional debate in Washington coincided precisely with the Paris talks on 12-13 June. An attempt was made to stall further deliberations in Congress until Kissinger's return from Paris, but on 12 June the Senate met to debate a bill which would cut off funds for military operations in Indochina as a whole. Legislation was passed on 14 June to cut off all funds for any type of US combat activity 'anywhere in Indochina' unless Congress gave its express consent.[90]

Kissinger was desperate. Briefing the Senate privately on the new agreement reached in Paris, Kissinger on 14 June requested that the Administration be given a 'finite amount of time' to pursue negotiations on Cambodia.[91] He referred

to some assurances he had received from Tho in Paris that could provide the basis for ending the fighting in Cambodia. Negotiations there were 'too complex' and needed an opportunity to mature. He met with Huang Zhen the same day to brief him on the Paris negotiations, to discuss Sihanouk's impending return to Peking and the possibility of making another visit to the Chinese capital.[92] Intended officially to brief Zhou on the results of the superpower discussions, this visit would follow Brezhnev's forthcoming trip to the US and at the same time might provide an opportunity for beginning a dialogue with Sihanouk. On 19 June Kissinger confirmed to Huang Zhen his readiness to meet the prince for political discussions provided a ceasefire had been brought about in Cambodia by the time of his visit to Peking - expected 'around 6 August 1973'.[93] Kissinger was optimistic about a ceasefire from mid-June onwards. The way would then be clear for Sihanouk to return to Phnom Penh.

But in Congress Kissinger's voice was not heeded. In his view the cut-off of funds threatened to deprive the US of its vital 'bargaining chip' since Zhou 'needed to be able to persuade the Khmer Rouge that he had bought them the end of our bombing in exchange for a compromise involving Sihannouk and parts of the existing structure'.[94] The talks he expected to be conducted through China's good offices represented to Kissinger 'the last throw of the dice'. If these

failed, it would spell the end of Cambodia and with it South Vietnam and Laos. On 18 June Kissinger sought the assistance of Melvin Laird, Counsellor to the President for Domestic Affairs.[95] Through Laird's intervention a bargain was extracted under which the bombing would be permitted to continue until a secret deadline of 1 September. Under the plan, Congress would have its early end to the bombing and the Administration's flexibility would have been maintained, since the Cambodian insurgents would not have known that the raids would stop by a fixed date.

The Cambodian problem, Kissinger explained on 25 June, should be seen in perspective as the 'very last phase of a very prolonged war'.[96] Refusing to give any details he admitted that Cambodia had been discussed with the Soviets during Brezhnev's visit to the US (18-25 June) but the 'primary problem' was whether it was possible in a 'finite period of time' to bring about a negotiation there that led towards a political settlement and a ceasefire.

Where Cambodia was concerned his memoirs suggest only that Nixon concluded his summit talks with Brezhnev by listing a long agenda of topics for later sessions which included 'Vietnam and Cambodia'.[97] The US-USSR Joint Communique of 24 June saw the two sides stress the need to 'bring an early end' to the military conflict in order to 'bring peace to the entire area of Indochina'.[98] The political future of Cambo-

dia would be left to the 'self-determination' of its peoples 'free from foreign interference'.

The Soviets showed some signs of adopting this attitude. After his US visit Brezhnev visited France (25-27 June) for talks with Pompidou which covered the latter's imminent visit to China in September. At Rambouillet the two leaders discussed 'international problems' including the Vietnam ceasefire and Cambodia. We know that Michel Jobert left immediately afterwards on 28 June for Washington to meet with Nixon and Kissinger to brief them on the content of the Rambouillet talks as well as to urge a solution in Cambodia centreing on the prince.[99]

While these high-level diplomatic initiatives to bring peace to both Vietnam and Cambodia were taking place, a role for Japan as direct participant in ensuring eventual stability in Indochina was simultaneously being carved out. It is to this we now turn.

III : III

A ROLE FOR JAPAN

'As Japan today moves out in many directions over the terrain of multipolar diplomacy, it will be another test of statesmanship on both sides to ensure that our policies are not divergent. Japan's foreign policy will continue to be shaped by her unique perspectives, purposes and style..... Our foreign policies will not be identical or inevitably in step.What will preserve our alliance in the new era is not rigidity of policy but a continuing consciousness of the basic interest in stability which we have in common. We must work to maintain a consensus in our policies.'

Richard Nixon

3 May 1973*

'At any rate it is important that the Nixon Doctrine, which is seeking regional stabilisation for the purpose of realising a new balance among the big powers, is being developed with the recognition of basic national rights as the axis. We should not lose sight of the fact that the present international situation is not only asking Japan's diplomacy towards Asia to recognise North Vietnam ..... but also it is asking our country's diplomacy to take the position of establishing well-balanced relations with the two forces in South Vietnam. As regards the international question, our country

is being pressed to promote economic aid again, and re-checking into its basic strategy, which precedes economic aid.'

Nihon Keizai Shimbun

15 June 1973**

* US Foreign Policy for the 1970's: Shaping a Durable Peace A Report to Congress by Richard Nixon, 3 May 1973, in DSB, 4 June 1973, p.768.

** in DSJP, 19 June 1973, p.4.

Submitting his proposed Foreign Assistance Act of 1973 President Nixon explained on 1 May that a 'new definition' of American leadership had been sought worldwide, in which assistance to other nations remained a key part of US foreign policy.[100] The Nixon Doctrine of 'shared responsibilities' had encouraged other nations to take an increasing commitment to provide for their own defences, security and economic development. In this respect it was 'critical' that the US should provide a level of foreign assistance that would help to assure its allies 'safe passage' through a period of transition.

In Indochina the Foreign Assistance Act was meant to assist 'friendly governments' in building and maintaining military capability to protect their independence and security as well as help South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos to

begin the task of rehabilitating and restructuring their war-torn countries.[101] To maintain a stable international order, it was important that 'threatened countries' were not only 'economically developed' but also able to defend themselves 'primarily through their own resources'. Congress was asked to authorise US$2.9 billion in foreign economic and military aid in the fiscal year ending 1 July - including US $632 million for rebuilding all countries in Indochina - except North Vietnam, 'until it had fully adhered to the Paris Agreement'. If and when that occurred, US assistance for reconstruction and development of both North and South Vietnam, Nixon believed, would represent a 'sound investment' in confirming the peace. The legislation that Nixon was presenting would authorise the continuation of economic assistance to South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos to provide a sound beginning in the process of rehabilitation and reconstruction there. Referring to the 'mutual benefit' of giving assistance, Nixon said Japan's emergence as a 'major economic power' and its 'significant and increasing contributions' could play an extremely important role towards 'a lasting peace' in the Pacific.[102]

Two days later, in his 3 May report to Congress, he described the complexity of the current geopolitical environment 'even in the Asian context alone' as a challenge requiring Japan to undertake a 'more political role'. Japan was already act-

ing 'autonomously' in an expanding sphere: its extensive aid programmes and growing economic ties with communist powers required that it made decisions on 'broader policy grounds' than economic calculations.[103]

In both the political and economic dimensions, Japan and the US, Nixon continued, had an 'obligation' as allies to pursue their individual objectives in ways that also served their common purposes. Whether the issue was the world-wide energy problem, economic or political relations with communist countries, or the provision of resources to developing countries, there was an 'overriding collective interest' in a stable global environment. Japan had moreover accelerated and broadened its political involvement in Asia and had taken a 'special interest' in the postwar reconstruction of Indochina, in the process opening a dialogue with North Vietnam.[104]

Acting in consultation with the US through routine diplomatic channels and high-level political consultations, such as Kissinger's visits to Tokyo in June 1972 and February 1973, Japan was beginning to develop a complementary strategy. On 1 May 1973 Foreign Minister Ohira visited Paris for one of his periodic consultations on topics which included Kissinger's proposed 'New Atlantic Charter' and other European issues, as well as on aid for the reconstruction of Vietnam. He reaffirmed the choice of the French capital as the venue for

the Japan-DRV talks on the establishment of diplomatic relations.[105] Tokyo announced the following day that these talks would be conducted between the Japanese Ambassador to Paris, Nakayama Yoshihiro and the DRV General-Delegate to Europe, Vo Van Sun.[106] Ambassadorial contacts had already been established between the two individuals in mid-March when North Vietnam accepted Miyake's mission to Hanoi. The objective now was an eventual plenary negotiation on the question of Japanese recognition of Hanoi, on which a final decision would be taken on 7 May following Ohira's return from Europe.

Japan's complementarity with the US was evident in mid-May when Ohira ordered a general review of Tokyo's foreign policy. Japan was to engage in multilateral peace diplomacy appropriate to its status as an economic power in developing relations with the US, the Soviet Union, Europe and Southeast Asia.[107] The evolving dialogue between Japan and Vietnam would constitute one focal point attuned to the progress of the Paris talks between Kissinger and Le Duc Tho. In conformity with this, Ohira recalled Tokyo's ambassadors from Indochina for policy consultations which took place in parallel with the current round (17-23 May) of the Paris talks between Kissinger and Le Duc Tho.

Discussion in Tokyo however remained cautious. The inclination was to hold negotiations with Hanoi, but this step, it was urged, should not be taken until the situation in Cam-

bodia stabilised. Although the content of consultations with the Indochinese ambassadors on 17 May was not revealed, they probably discussed the present situation in the respective countries as well as the timing favoured for the establishment of diplomatic relations with Tokyo and Hanoi. At the second session on 18 May 'fluid factors' such as the outcome of the Paris talks and Brezhnev's forthcoming visit to the US were also taken into consideration.[108]

The two-day conference affirmed in the event that South Vietnam had no objections to the establishment of relations between Hanoi and Tokyo. Although the infringements of the peace by both sides were still a problem, the situation was not 'serious enough' to warrant any delay in Tokyo-Hanoi consultations since the Thieu regime appeared 'stable'. Phnom Penh and Vientiane were also described as supporting Japanese initiatives towards Hanoi.[109]

One unresolved problem was the question of aid. Japan's inclination as we have seen, was to give aid to Indochina as a whole through an international organisation like the UN, since multilateral diplomacy implied multilateral aid. Washington furthermore had consistently emphasised its concern that economic aid to Hanoi should not strengthen its position vis-à-vis the South. After the Tokyo consultations of 17-18 May, however some sort of compromise was reached. Although the 'multilateral' formula was still recommended,

'bilateral aid' was now advocated as a temporary measure.

Hanoi was anxious to receive aid and had asked Japan during Miyake's April visit, to be specific about the amount of its proposed aid, to facilitate the drawing up of the DRV's own reconstruction plan. In this connection Hanoi now requested two Polish ministers scheduled to visit Washington during the first week of May to discuss with it the future of aid to the DRV.[110] In the event the visit was cancelled on account of White House displeasure with the Polish team of the ICCS who were accused of being biased in favour of Hanoi.

On 10 May William Sullivan suggested that although Hanoi remained suspicious of foreign economic aid and did not trust the Soviet Union or China, there might be a 'conscious parallelism' in aid since its need for assistance might motivate it to comply more fully with the Paris Agreement.[111] Assistance in the region, Deputy Secretary of State, Kenneth Rush added on 15 May, was the 'second major task' that confronted the US and that its representatives were 'currently engaged' in an assessment of overall needs.[112] As DRV intentions remained 'unclear' a request for assistance would be held in abeyance until such time as Hanoi demonstrated its resolve to meet its commitments under the Paris Agreement. Restraint on Hanoi was also imposed in mid-May by Washington when the Indochina reconstruction programme was withheld.

Washington's restraint appeared to be compensated by Tokyo's enthusiasm to shoulder part of the aid commitment to Indochina. On 21 May, two days before the end of this round of the Paris talks, the Japanese Foreign Ministry disclosed that Japan would open talks with Hanoi 'next month' on the establishment of diplomatic relations and intended to conclude a bilateral aid agreement with it.[113] The outline of an Indochina aid agreement was announced, to be the responsibility of the Foreign and Finance Ministries, so that aid could be administered in harmony with the political normalisation talks. Humanitarian emergency aid would be extended as envisaged under the Paris Agreement, and a disbursement of Yen 1 billion appropriated in the 1973 budget.

Reconstruction aid would be given under the 'multilateral formula' to all Indochina without favour to any particular country. Tokyo's option was based on its belief in the indivisibility of reconstruction and development for the entire peninsula. At the same time Hanoi's preferences would be taken into account by the 'compromise' solution of extending bilateral aid until the practical implementation of the multilateral formula was worked out. A coordination of views would be reached between the Foreign and Finance Ministries on the amount of aid to be defrayed from reserve funds for the current fiscal year. A concrete plan would then be submitted to Hanoi.

The interval following the end of this round of the Paris talks (17-23 May) appeared to mark a transition in Japanese policy on Indochina. On 25 May the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo announced its decision to transfer Miyake Wasuke from the Asian Affairs Bureau to the Mission for International Organisations in Geneva as its First Secretary.[114] From Geneva, Miyake periodically referred from September 1973 to Paris: according to him, a loose aid consortium arrangement with the World Bank (IBRD) and the ADB was holding deliberations.[115] We might recall that in April 1973 Nguyen Van Thieu requested the World Bank to help form an aid group for the RVN (Appendix III). In this connection Robert McNamara, President of the World Bank, was later reported to have visited Tokyo in April 1973 and a World Bank mission was sent to South Vietnam in May to review the situation there.[116] The latter probably explained why in mid-April on his return from the US, Thieu envisaged the onset of a new period of reconstruction with multilateral economic assistance. As we shall see later on, Thieu unveiled in the last third of May 1973 an eight-year reconstruction plan for South Vietnam.

Tokyo was by now moving visibly towards the establishment of diplomatic relations with North Vietnam. Miyake's transfer suggested the Japanese Government was ready to advance from the stage of preliminary contacts with Hanoi to

fully
-fledged negotiations. Such negotiations were scheduled to take place in Paris at the end of June 'at the earliest' but the Foreign Ministry revealed that the outcome of the Paris talks had been a 'big factor' in the timing.

Hanoi on its part was not unaware of Japan's plans. On 26 May it postulated three conditions for the establishment of relations: 1) Japan must acknowledge the existence of the PRG, 2) Hanoi had the right to claim repayment of reparations by Japan and a bilateral economic aid plan be launched, 3) The transportation to South Vietnam of US weapons on the basis of the US-Japan Security Treaty be suspended.[117]

Tokyo's response exhibited greater willingness than previously to give ground on these three issues. It was also prepared the same day to facilitate the entry of PRG officials to Japan on condition that they carried North Vietnamese passports. As for reparations, Tokyo proposed to follow the approach adopted under the 'Mongolian formula' under which diplomatic relations were established with Mongolia in February 1972, and reparations subsumed in a programme of economic cooperation. Tokyo was not ready to suspend the transportation of US forces' weapons to South Vietnam however and efforts would be made to convince Hanoi of its necessity if and when peace was achieved.[118]

Tokyo also expressed its desire to appease Hanoi when it declined on 30 May a request by Saigon for Japan to participate in the ICCS following Canada's pending withdrawal.[119]

Canada had alleged in May that the Commission was impotent on account of the bias on the part of some 'elements' - an allusion to Hungary and Poland - in favour of Hanoi. A sequence of meetings held in Saigon (23-29 May) following the arrival of Foreign Minister Mitchell Sharp, failed to resolve the issues. Tokyo's refusal to participate in the peacekeeping force was based on the excuse that its laws prohibited sending troops abroad which made it unable to perform its duties as an ICCS member.

This notwithstanding, official attitudes in Hanoi towards Japan appeared to be in a state of flux at the end of May. A long article in Hoc Tap criticised the 'successes and limitations' of the Japanese economic miracle.[120] Thanks to the purchase and exploitation of patents elsewhere, Japan managed to restore its economy, especially the industrial sector, which enabled it to occupy the third rung of global industrial might. Nevertheless, the Japanese model, implemented at great cost to a population menaced by growing pollution, was seen as a waste of energy reserves and unsuited to the Vietnamese expreience.

This criticism apart, Japan was well aware that the situation in Vietnam might not in fact stabilise. If that was the case, the Tokyo-Hanoi negotiations now envisaged for June might have to be postponed until after July. The crucial factor in determining this timing was expected to be the second session of the Kissinger-Tho talks (6-9 June). Even before

the opening of these talks however, Japan was already making plain its intention to negotiate with Hanoi and proposed on 2 June that they might be held 'without attaching any conditions'.[121]

Hanoi's conditions were taken into account but were not given added emphasis. Japanese-North Vietnamese exchanges were continuing favourably in the interim. A multiparty Diet -men's mission to Hanoi (2-10 June) was received by Truong Chinh, Chairman of the National Asembly, who accepted an invitation from the JCP to visit Japan.[122] Nguyen Van Hieu, the PRG's Deputy Representative at the Paris talks was also invited. As opposed to the situation at the end of March, Tokyo now conceded that entry into Japan by these individuals would not pose any special problems since the establishment of diplomatic relations with Hanoi was on the cards.

The 13 June Joint Communique brought mixed reactions in Tokyo. The press believed it only confirmed the provisions of the accord, especially the principle for settlement of all problems by the parties concerned. 'Markedly new elements', Yomiuri Shimbun said on 15 June, were not to be found in the text of the communique.[123] It was 'dangerous' to speculate on the profits or losses of the contending parties Asahi Shimbun said,[124] but it was clearly unfavourable to Saigon. Ohira however welcomed the communique on the grounds that it had contributed to the solution of outstanding politic-

al issues between the Saigon Government and the PRG and was, on the whole, 'one advance'. Sufficient conditions, in the Tokyo Government's view, had been established for opening diplomatic negotiations between Tokyo and Hanoi, in talks to be held in July 1973.[125]

Tokyo advised Hanoi to reexamine the problems of reparations and of the recognition of the PRG, to 'clarify' its views for Tokyo's benefit before the diplomatic talks began. Despite these difficulties, the Japanese authorities were optimistic that the talks might be concluded by the autumn. And they were ready to give aid. 'Substantial economic cooperation' was promised as Ohira instructed the Foreign Ministry to formulate a plan for assistance in the reconstruction of Indochina before the opening of these talks.[126]

These positive developments notwithstanding, events elsewhere had taken a turn midyear which would have repercussions later on on the overall framework for peace in Indochina.

USA	JAPAN	CHINA	SOUTH VIETNAM
1 May: Nixon on Japan's emergence as 'major economic power'. 3 May: Nixon challenges Japan to undertake 'more political role' in Asia.	1 May, Paris: Ohira reaffirms choice of Paris as venue for Japan-DRV talks on diplomatic relations.		May 1973: Nguyen Tien Hung arrives in Saigon.
4-9 May: Kissinger in Moscow.			
10 May: Visit of two Polish Ministers to US cancelled on account of bias of their ICCS delegation.		11 May: Le Duc Tho and Hoang Van Hoan in Peking.	
15 May: Kenneth Rush on DRV assistance withheld. 17-23 May, Paris: 1st Session of Kissinger-Le Duc Tho talks.	14 May: Ohira on Japan's multilateral diplomacy. 17-18 May: Japanese Ambassadors of Indochina meet in Tokyo 21 May: Foreign Ministry discloses that Japan to open talks with DRV 'next month'. 25 May: Miyake Wasuke's transfer to Geneva aid mission announced.		20 May: Nguyen Van Thieu unveils Eight-Year Reconstruction programme (1973-80). 23 May: Sullivan arrives in Saigon.
22 May: Sullivan leaves Paris with letter from Nixon.			24-26 May: Sullivan-Tran Van Lam talks.
27 May, New York: Kissinger-Huang Hua talks.	26 May: Japan on 'Mongolian Formula' as response to Hanoi's demand for reparations.		
29 May, Washington: Kissinger-Huang Zhen talks.			
30 May: Nixon writes to Thieu.	30 May: Tokyo declines request by Saigon to participate in ICCS following withdrawal of Canada.		30 May: Saigon press reports US, DRV to issue new Communique 'with or without concurrence of allies'.
30 May - 1 June, Reykjavik: Nixon-Pompidou talks.			31 May: Chargé Whitehouse provides Thieu with 'precise details' of US proposal.
6-9 June, Paris: 2nd Session of Kissinger-Le Duc Tho talks.	2 June: Tokyo proposes negotiations with Hanoi to be held 'without preconditions'. 2-11 June: Japanese Multiparty delegation visits DRV.	4-11 June: Le Duan and Pham Van Dong in Peking.	2 June: Thieu renews 'objections' to US proposal. 5 June: Hung offered post of Special Assistant for Economic Reconstruction. 6 June: Thieu complains RVN a 'victim of aggression'. 7 June: Nixon prepared to proceed without Thieu; Hung takes up appointment. 8 June: Thieu informs Nixon of his formula.
	10 June: Truong Chinh invited to Japan by Dietmen.		9 June: Thieu meets with National Security Council; Nixon message warns of 'disastrous consequences' of RVN failure to sign.
12-13 June, Paris: 3rd Session of Kissinger-Le Duc Tho talks.		11 June: Joint PRC-DRV Communique.	10 June: Nixon's answer that RVN's concerns rejected by the DRV.
13 June 1973: Joint US-DRV Joint Communique.			12 June: Thieu complains that new Communique would produce 'two territories under two governments' in South Vietnam.
	15 June: Tokyo welcomes Communique as 'advance' for establishing diplomatic relations with Hanoi.		15 June: 2nd Ceasefire in effect.
			23 June: Mitsui described to have drafted programme for construction of Cam Ranh industrial complex.

NOTES

CHAPTER III : I

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5. Ibid., 24 May 1973.

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8. NCNA, 27 November 1979, SWB/FE/6283/A3/20.

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CHAPTER IV

THE INDIVISIBILITY OF PEACE II

JULY - AUGUST 15 1973

'...The Soviets, the Chinese and the North Vietnamese had all come to the conclusion after July 1 that negotiations were dead and the Khmer Rouge were going to win.'

Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin to Kissinger*

* HAK II, p.362.

IV : I

THE CAMBODIAN DÉBÂCLE

In Washington Congressional pressure continued throughout the latter part of June 1973, to mount against funding the bombing of Cambodia. On 25 June the House joined the Senate in voting to cut off all funds for bombing in Cambodia. The House furthermore rejected, by a tie-vote of 204: 204, a proposed compromise to let the Administration use the funds for 60 more days of bombing. It proved impossible to keep Kissinger's September 1 deadline secret since it had to be named as a cutoff date in a 'public compromise' to impede pressure for an immediate halt to the bombing.

On 26 June the Senate sent the White House a measure to cut off all available funds for the bombing. Nixon retained the option of rejecting the prohibition of funds and was obliged within two days either to veto the supplemental appropriations bill, which embodied the prohibition or bring the bombing to a halt.

On 27 June Nixon duly issued his veto. Declaring that the bombing ban would 'cripple or destroy' efforts to achieve a Cambodian ceasefire, he cautioned that Washington was involved in concluding the 'last element' of that settlement. If this were undone by Congressional action, the full impact would include: the removal of the communist incentive to negotiate which would undercut ongoing diplomatic efforts to achieve a settlement and the reversal of the momentum towards lasting peace in Indochina set in motion in January. For Southeast Asia it would gravely jeopardise the ability of the Cambodian armed forces to prevent a communist military victory which could also threaten the fragile balance of negotiated agreements, political alignments and military capabilities upon which the overall peace there depended.[1] The House however upheld its earlier vote and a new round of Congressional efforts to force a bombing halt seemed imminent.

To Kissinger these developments jeopardised not only Cambodia but the remaining prospects for the Paris Agree-

ment in Vietnam and Indochina as a whole. Melvin Laird continued to lend his support to Kissinger and urged Congress that 'very sensitive negotiations' would be in train in July which would unravel if the Administration was deprived of the opportunity to bomb. He also warned that Nixon would veto every bill that contained a ban on bombing Cambodia.[2]

The result was compromise. On 29 June Congress and Nixon agreed on a cut-off date of 15 August 1973. Funds would be withheld on that date on all US military operations throughout Indochina unless Congress specifically approved an extension. Nixon still had the right to veto any bill that ordered a halt before then. To all intents and purposes however, this 'compromise' ended the four-year struggle between Congress and Nixon over the war. It marked for Kissinger the 'legislative end' of all military activity and destroyed what possibility remained of a neutral, free Cambodia. The prospect now was for a total communist takeover that would render Sihanouk 'nearly as irrelevant as Lon Nol'.[3]

From Bucharest, Sihanouk made a final appeal on 22 June to the US for an honourable end to the war. He also gave some indication that vengeance would not be exacted against Lon Nol provided the 'traitor' left the country and that if US intervention ended, the war would stop.[4] A week later on 30 June, the prince castigated the US and the Sovi-

et Union aided by France, active in bringing about negotiations, as intent on separating the Khmer Rouge from GRUNK. These powers were also anxious to enlist the support of China and North Vietnam for a political settlement.[5] But Washington had missed an important opportunity for a negotiated solution to Cambodia. There were no more proposals from Sihanouk. A telegramme dated 28 June from Khieu Samphan, operating in the interior, advised Sihanouk 'not to lower himself' any further.[6]

By now however the prospects for any outside intervention were fading rapidly. The ultimate cause of this was the imminent cut-off of US bombing. On 1 July AKI declared that the '15 August' compromise demonstrated more than anything else that the 'superpowers' could no longer collude with one another to 'settle the fate' of other countries.[7]

By early July 1973 the Nixon Administration was giving added emphasis to the search for alternatives in Cambodia to forestall a military surrender by Phnom Penh to the Khmer Rouge. High priority was given to a ceasefire and to starting formal negotiations as soon as possible between the Lon Nol and Sihanouk forces, as well as any other 'interested parties'. What were described as 'delicate discussions' between the US and 'various governments', believed to include the Soviet Union, China and North Vietnam, would focus on

bringing the Lon Nol government and Sihanouk's GRUNK to the negotiating table.[8] Washington was also requesting those governments with contacts in Peking to join in efforts to persuade the prince to seek a political settlement guaranteeing him some power and not trust a military victory in which he might be reduced to a puppet. It was speculated on 6 July for instance that the Chinese, the French, the Rumanian and Yugoslavian governments had spoken to him, the last two while he was on his Eastern European tour.

On his return to Peking on 5 July, Sihanouk said there had been 'no secret negotiations'. Through messages relayed to Nixon by Arab and African leaders, the US President refused to negotiate and had told the prince to talk to Lon Nol.[9] In an interview with Le Figaro on 5 July 1973, the prince explained that negotiations with Lon Nol would lead to a partition of Cambodia since whenever the great powers partition a country, it remains that way.[10] Sihanouk proclaimed his readiness to pursue combat with the Americans 'till the end and categorically rejected partition of Cambodia into 'two parts or two states, two governments or two administrations'. He had in fact told the communists in the maquis that he would 'leave them in power' as he did not want the responsibilities power entailed.[11]

In Washington Kissinger saw Sihanouk's return to Peking as spelling the demise of his Cambodian proposal.[12] He

put the blame squarely on the conduct of the prince. Sihanouk, he insisted, must have been aware that Washington had offered him a bombing halt, negotiations and a meeting with himself in early August. The prince however refused to negotiate while simultaneously blaming his own side's intransigent position on pressure from the Khmer Rouge. The latter, Kissinger judged, were privy to this as the military situation was evolving clearly in their favour and with the bombing halt imminent there was no longer a need to compromise.

US relations with China towards the latter half of June 1973 had given the appearance of being encouraging. Kyodo reported from Moscow on 25 June that Zhou Enlai would visit the US in October 1973 and that Nixon will make his second visit to Peking in the spring of 1974. We now know that Qiao Guanhua had told Manac'h in Peking on 29 June that the possibility of a Zhou visit to the US should be discounted and that the date of Kissinger's visit to Peking was not yet fixed.[13]

The Administration continued to work through China in the hope of reaching a negotiated peace in Cambodia. Speculation on such an initiative had been fanned by the advance publicity on 2 July by the White House that a proposed meeting between Nixon and Huang Zhen would take place on 6 July.[14] Huang moreover was believed to be the first chief of mission to be invited there in what was his second meeting with Nixon and the first on policy since his arrival in late May. It was also currently thought that Kissinger might soon make

another visit to Peking for talks with Zhou Enlai, and possibly the prince, to intensify the Administration's diplomatic efforts to achieve a negotiated settlement on Cambodia.

At San Clemente Kissinger made no effort on 6 July to quell such speculation. No details were divulged although he said that US policy on Cambodia was devoted to the idea that all major countries that had an interest in Indochina should 'use their influence' in the direction of restraint.[15] The public expressions of Chinese leaders on this question Kissinger revealed, were directed towards the implementation of peace 'throughout Indochina'. He also confirmed that he would travel to Peking later in the summer to confer with Zhou but that no date had been set.

The Chinese for their part continued at this stage to serve as a channel of communication between the US and the prince. We now know that on 6 July Huang Zhen - who conferred at much greater length with Kissinger than Nixon - had brought a message to San Clemente. It referred to the solution proposed for Cambodia by Kissinger on 27 May and reiterated that Peking would, as promised, inform Sihanouk about this 'tentative proposal' now that he had returned from his tour. Kissinger's 6 August visit to Peking was confirmed. Huang Zhen's 6 July message also cautioned Kissinger against any 'public speculation' about the talks between the Lon Nol clique and Sihanouk. Such speculation, the message was clear, would prove 'extremely disadvantageous' to the search for a Cambo-

dian settlement and 'will even cause trouble'.[16]

Where Cambodia was concerned it is conceivable that the Chinese were anxious to see the bombing continue until Zhou could persuade the Khmer Rouge that he had been instrumental in engineering the decision to end it. In Peking Zhou Enlai on 6 July had met Warren Magnusson, the head of a Congressional delegation, who said the Premier was 'visibly angered' when he referred to the turn of events in Cambodia.[17] Magnusson described Zhou's anger as a reaction to the Cambodian bombing which would 'soon be over' and quoted Zhou as saying while expressing solid support for the prince, 'How can Sihanouk be patient for even ten days when bombs are falling on his country?'

China's continued support for the prince appeared calculated to give him enough autonomy to dissipate the impression that he was being used to further the Khmer Rouge's own ends. Premier Zhou was however uncharacteristically brief on 6 July about the 'success' of Sihanouk's tour, at a banquet to welcome him. This might be a conspicuous reminder of the latter's unsuccessful attempts to reach Nixon in his bid for a peace 'without victor or vanquished'. Zhou's homage to the prince was followed by a condemnation of US bombing as well as a denunciation of the menace of possible South Vietnamese intervention and the introduction of Thai mercenaries to Cambodia.[18] The Premier referred to these 'truculent actions' as 'lifting a rock only to drop it on one's own feet'.

In Phnom Penh however, the Lon Nol Government officially proposed negotiations on 6 July with the 'other side' and said that they would accept an immediate ceasefire.[19] The move was considered a constraint aimed at some form of settlement before the '15 August' deadline. Premier In Tam declared on 9 July however that Phnom Penh was not involved in negotiations with anyone to end the war in Cambodia: the'big powers' were instrumental in whatever negotiations were going on and the Americans had neither consulted nor kept him informed about developments.[20] To Kissinger, intent on thrusting Peking into a mediatory role, the proposal was 'part of a step planned to provide a diplomatic framework for the Chinese initiative'.[21] In Washington the Nixon Admin-istration therefore gave 'strong endorsement' to these proposals and said that Foreign Minister Long Boret's offer constituted a 'significant declaration' which set forth a major initiative for peace in Cambodia.[22] In Peking however GRUNK Premier Penn Nouth condemned the 6 July offer as a 'manoeuvre', emphatic that any prospect of direct negotiations with the Americans was up to the resistance to decide.[23]

In the course of the next few weeks China's limited cooperation with the US was to cease altogether. There were a number of reasons for this. In the first place the Chinese had always insisted on strict discretion from the US side where the Cambodian negotiations were concerned. China insisted officially that the Cambodian people must settle

their own affairs themselves 'without outside interference'.

Motivated possibly by a sense of disillusionment with the US handling of the talks, the Chinese were also beginning to explore the possibility of working with a different intermediary. On the same day, 6 July 1973, Zhou personally requested the French Ambassador, Etienne Manac'h, to explain the Cambodian dilemma to his government and explicitly suggested France's intervention alongside the US.[24] Manac'h passed on the suggestion in a letter dated 6 July to his Foreign Minister, Michel Jobert.[25] Jobert endorsed it with some enthusiasm. As we have seen, President Pompidou and Jobert himself had made an attempt in Reykjavik (31 May-1June) to engage in dialogue with Nixon and Kissinger on the Cambodian problem (See p. 202). Manac'h now attempted to convince Jobert that support should be given to Sihanouk and GRUNK to enable them to gain a foothold in Khmer territory. If this could be achieved then sooner or later the Americans would come to their senses and see the folly of bombing. And France's intervention might be expected to yield worthwhile benefits in the future. Sihanouk, Manac'h added in a telegramme to Jobert on 7 July, had actually expressed a preference in May for France's intervention alongside that of the US where his country was concerned.[26] One difficulty was that Sihanouk had since been smarting from Jobert's remarks of 20 June which had belittled him at a time when his stature was rising in Phnom Penh, Moscow and Washington.[27]

Responding to Manac'h on 10 July, Jobert fully concurred that contact be maintained with Sihanouk.[28] The latter should be made to understand that France had no intention of engineering any solution other than his unconditional return to Cambodia. Any attempt to use him as a transitory figure in resolving the Cambodian dilemma was unrealistic. Jobert had personally made this plain to both Gromyko at Rambouillet during Brezhnev's visit and to Kissinger while in Reykjavik for the summit between Nixon and Pompidou. By mid-July therefore a convergence of the Chinese and French position emerged on the one hand while the respective stances of the US and the USSR, according to France, were being brought closer.

France was arriving at a view of the Cambodian issue and in particular of the centrality of Sihanouk, which accorded satisfactorily with China's own. On the initiative of Chinese Foreign Minister, Ji Pengfei, Manac'h made contact on 10 July with Wang Dong, the Foreign Ministry's Political Director.[29] Manac'h emerged with the conclusion that 'other interested countries' including the Soviet Union, were manoeuvring rapidly and that France should take decisive action now. In this connection Manac'h noticed on Sihanouk's arrival in Peking on 6 July, that the heads of mission of the socialist bloc had been present for the first time to pay their respects to the prince. Moscow was represented by its Chargé d'Affaires in place of Ambassador Vassili Tolstikov who had dep-

arted on 30 June for Moscow to attend a session of the Supreme Soviet scheduled for 17 July.[30]

Kissinger had noticed 'signs of hesitation' emanating from Peking vis-à-vis the US role.[31] In an assessment of Cambodian diplomacy David Bruce, Head of the Liaison Office in Peking informed Kissinger on 11 July that the Chinese 'seemed to be backing away' from involvement in a Cambodian negotiation. Bruce believed the Chinese leaders might have 'private doubts' about the ability of Sihanouk to control the Khmer Rouge. On the same day Peking suddenly recalled Huang Zhen who travelled home by way of Paris, indicative perhaps of the furtherance of the Sino-French initiative.[32] In a parallel but unexpected development, Kissinger was informed on the same day that his China visit scheduled for 6 August would now have to await Huang Zhen's consultations in Peking.[33]

At this stage rival claims to supremacy within GRUNK appeared to be taking place between the factions in Peking and those in the interior. In Peking GRUNK declared on 12 July that it was a government of national union 'par excellence'; Penn Nouth would return to Phnom Penh once the capital was 'liberated' where he would continue to lead the country as head of an actual cabinet.[34] From the interior a statement by Khieu Samphan, Hou Youn and Hu Nim on 13 July

pronounced the CPNLAF ready to fight to the finish, asking 'puppet officers' to launch uprisings and unite with the CPNLAF in the 'liberated zone' with or without arms.[35]

In a move that seemed to close any possibility for direct contact with Kissinger, Sihanouk announced on 13 July that he would go to North Korea the moment Kissinger arrived in Peking.[36] It was highly probable that the resistance in the interior had pressurised him to refuse any form of negotiation with the US. The prince said that any meeting with Kissinger would offer Nixon an excuse to tell Congress and the American people that negotiations were going on which would give Nixon leverage with Congress to continue the bombing after the 15 August deadline. On 16 July Sihanouk assailed those foreign powers which were still bent on resolving the problem of Cambodia 'in conformity with their own interests', interests evidently contrary to those of the Khmer people.[37] FUNK and GRUNK, he continued, invited the powers concerned to renounce totally and forever, any involvement in Cambodian affairs. On 17 July he repeated that he was 'washing his hands of state affairs,' once Phnom Penh was 'liberated'.[38]

Reflecting the reality of Khmer Rouge power, Sihanouk's pronouncements began to take an increasingly intransigent tone. These have added significance when seen against what the Hungarian news agency, Nepszabadsag, described on 15

July as a 'rehabilitation campaign' taking place in Peking.[39] This was probably also a factor in the growing Chinese reluctance to work with Washington. The 10th CCP Congress was about to be held and many foreign observers, notably those in the Soviet camp, were detecting signs of a fundamental struggle over both foreign and domestic policies in the Chinese leadership. Moscow on 15 July spoke of the 'internal strife' at every level and the 'continuing instability' of the Chinese leadership.[40] Despite speculation surrounding the congress and the National People's Congress, the appointments of the PRC Chairman, Defence Minister and many important posts had remained unfilled, Moscow added on 19 July.[41] Peking's leaders were really attempting to conceal the intrigues of Zhongnanhai but the 'covert struggle' between hostile factions within the leadership's 'inner circle' were showing signs of emptying into an 'open struggle', it continued. One of the major victims of the Cultural Revolution, Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping was moreover returning to public life although he was at one time branded the 'Number One Capitalist'.[42]

These developments exercised a profound impact on Kissinger's proposed visit to Peking. The date originally set for an official announcement of that visit had been 16 July. After Huang Zhen's recall on 11 July, Kissinger proposed to Han Xu, Deputy Chief of the Chinese Liaison Office, that an ann-

ouncement be made for 19 or 23 July.[43] The question remain-ed in an impasse. In the context of the prevailing state of affairs, this was perhaps understandable. On 18 July Kissinger interpreted the Chinese silence as their having abandoned the Cambodian initiative altogether. Han Xu on that day delivered a message to Kissinger which said in effect that Peking was 'no longer willing even to communicate the American negotiating proposal to Sihanouk'.[44] In what was construed as a volte-face Han Xu repeated the 'most extreme demands' of the Khmer Rouge, insisting that Washington accept them:

'The origin of the Cambodian question is clear to the US side. It is up to the doer to undo the knot. The key to the settlement of the question is held by the US, not by the others. If the US truly desires to settle the Cambodian question, those above reasonable demands raised by the Cambodian side should be acceptable to it. It is hoped that the US side will give serious consideration to this and translate it into action.'[45]

On 19 July 1973 the date on which Kissinger had suggested that his China visit be announced, the Chinese pointedly informed him that his 6 August visit was 'no longer convenient'. The date suggested was '16 August', the day after the bombing halt. Kissinger made Peking wait almost a week before sending his reply to Han Xu's note of 18 July. On 27 July Kissinger proposed a visit for 13-16 September.[46] The visit only took place in November 1973.

In a message to the Khmer nation dated 19 July Sihanouk renewed his attack.[47] The US, he believed, was still seeking to pressurise GRUNK into a compromise with Phnom Penh through the agency of China, the Soviet Union and North Vietnam. Sihanouk was confident however of the solidarity of his Vietnamese and Chinese allies. As for the Soviet Union, whatever the degree of its friendship with the US, it would never force patriotic Khmers to abandon their objective of expelling US 'neo-colonialism' completely from Khmer soil.

In the interim the growing confidence of the Khmer Rouge was signalled on the occasion of a National Congress (19-21 July) in the interior under the chairmanship of Khieu Samphan, Vice-Premier, Minister of National Defence and Commander-in-Chief of the CPNLAF.[48] A statement released after the Congress emphasised that the Cambodian people 'could not remain inactive' in the face of repeated subversion and aggression by the US. The Khmer Rouge leadership made three demands: First, the US should cease its bombing and withdraw its troops and military personnel from Cambodia; Second, the fate of the Phnom Penh regime should be decided by the Cambodian people on their own; Third, FUNK and GRUNK should take control of Phnom Penh and of the leadership of the Khmer nation and that the nation would continue to intensify their struggle in all forms to bring about the end of US bombing and permit the people to settle their own problems 'without foreign interference'.

A struggle of national liberation would be waged domestically, the statement continued, while a policy of 'true peace and neutrality' was aimed abroad at non-alignment. No foreign bases would be tolerated on Khmer soil. Relations with other countries would be conducted on the basis of 'non-interference' in Cambodian internal affairs.'Unconditional' economic assistance from all nations desiring to aid it would be accepted. Certain of ultimate victory, the Khmer Rouge were now in a position to dispense with the legitimacy Sihanouk gave them and indeed with the prince himself.

In a related development, nine days afterwards Premier Zhou Enlai personally put the final touch into the scenario in a speech on 28 July referring to the Cambodian National Congress.[49] He extended China's firm support to the Cambodian people's struggle. The US, he declared, 'must stop' its bombing and all other acts of military intervention, so that the Cambodian people could settle their own problems 'free from foreign interference'. By the same token Zhou also underlined support for the Five-Point Declaration of Sihanouk of 23 March 1970 which remained a consistent principle of Chinese policy. By 28 July however the Premier's remarks suggested that the left had prevailed in the interior since the eclipse of Sihanouk and the ascendancy of the radicals were taking their toll.

With the desertion of his putative Chinese partners, Kissinger finally abandoned all hope. There was no point, in his

view, negotiating on an issue when the other side 'clearly and from the outset leaves no room for negotiations'. By the end of July Kissinger too had come to the reluctant conclusion that the talks would have to be left to the Cambodian parties themselves.[50]

These developments apart, Kissinger also observed that it was after Congressional action that Sihanouk 'reversed himself'.[51] The spectacle of the US 'voluntarily abandoning' all commitments had changed the Cambodian perception of whichever complexion of events. Congress, he contends, was also culpable. In a letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Nixon on 3 August 1973 indicated his decision to conform to the views of the legislature and accept the 15 August bombing halt. But the President did not fail to draw to the Congress' attention the dangerous consequences of a vote which in effect 'sapped the motivations which could have prompted negotiations'.[52] The passage of the Congressional act Nixon warned, would undermine the incentive to negotiate a settlement in Cambodia and 15 August risked marking the acceleration of what could be a 'regrettable development'.

Nixon's letter was followed by an affidavit on Cambodia by Secretary Rogers to the Supreme Court on 4 August. The cessation of all combat activities in Cambodia by US armed forces on and after 15 August 1973, had led to intensive planning being undertaken between representatives of the US and

Cambodian Governments for the purpose of improving the latter's self-defence capability through assistance programmes approved by the Congress and the President.[53]

Nixon's letter and Roger's affidavit, released after a warning to Hanoi was said to have left a feeling of guardedness on the part of the legislature. In the last resort it urged them to support the responsibility, in the event of a probable collapse of the Phnom Penh regime and the deteriorating situation in Southeast Asia.

One last US initiative was nonetheless set in motion. It was launched not by Kissinger but by Senator Mike Mansfield, Leader of the Democratic majority in the US Congress who had been scheduled to visit China in late July. In an interview with the Baltimore Sun on 23 July 1973, Mansfield made clear that he was prepared to use the personal relationship he had cultivated with Sihanouk to facilitate a meeting between the prince and the National Security Adviser.[54] The Senator perceived, correctly it later proved, that Sihanouk would probably refuse to see Kissinger before 15 August. This notwithstanding, he believed that Sihanouk was still trying to take advantage of the deadline. Only the approbation of Congress could provide any change of attitude on the part of the US administration. Mansfield was willing to defer his China visit in an effort to maximise the prospects of this personal overture.

The Senator was aware that there had been a change in

the Cambodian situation. If the prince had realistically proposed to meet Nixon, it was aimed at an end to the conflict and at possible rapprochement with the US. Mansfield felt that the US Administration had begun - in the last six weeks - to understand that Sihanouk constituted the key to American retreat from Cambodia and the restoration of peace in his country. Nixon, Mansfield believed, could not have missed the opportunity to make clear to Huang Zhen in San Clemente on 6 July. Mansfield wondered in this 23 July interview, whether the President could have suggested an initiative then by Zhou Enlai on behalf of Sihanouk? After all Zhou alone had been undeniably predisposed to Sihanouk and alone had the power to influence him, albeit within limits.

Simultaneously hopes for France's intervention in the Cambodian dilemma were still being expressed to Ambassador Manac'h in Peking. On 23 July Jobert suggested in a message that France should complete instead the reversal of the question by intervention.[55] The issue could be solved through the 'prudent' convergence of Paris and Peking and the dialogue should be placed on a more satisfactory level. Four days later, on 27 July 1973 Jobert met Brezhnev in the Crimea.[56] The content of these talks is not known, but it is likely that Jobert was hoping to induce the Soviet leader to exert some influence on the North Vietnamese and probably also on the Americans, in settling the Cambodian war. By then it was

too late. As we have seen, Kissinger made public on 27 July his announcement postponing his visit to China.

A few days before the bombing halt a last initiative emanated from Sihanouk. In a telegramme dated 4 August from Pyongyang, he said GRUNK would never tolerate 'any meddling' in Cambodian affairs.[57] In a marked change from this position, the prince sent a message on 10 August to Senator Mike Mansfield offering Congress 'Peace with Honour' with only two conditions: the complete and definitive halt to aerial bombing and all direct and indirect US intervention in Cambodia; and the end to all military aid to the Khmer Republic.[58] This was accompanied by a public telegramme addressed to all countries maintaining relations with the Lon Nol regime, urging them to close down their embassies, since his own government would 'unfailingly' be established in Phnom Penh in the 'not too distant future'. The Khmer people's forces, he warned, were already in Phnom Penh in accordance with the political programme issued by Khieu Samphan, Hou Youn and Hu Nim. On 12 August Sihanouk revealed that 'victory' was practically achieved since the Khmer Rouge remained inflexible in the position they had fixed 'once and for all' and armed resistance would continue until the Lon Nol regime was 'radically and irreversibly eradicated'.[59] There was absolutely no possibility for negotiations.

The limits imposed by '15 August 1973' were clear to Sihanouk. He pointed to two measures the US could take

against the Khmer people: First, the introduction of mercenaries from Thailand and 'even army units from Saigon' starting 16 August, and second, the Saigon air force might be on the alert to relieve the US air force with 'raids of genocide' in Cambodia starting from 15 August. The 'only' solution was first, the complete and final cessation of all military intervention by the USA and its 'satellites'; second, complete elimination of the Khmer 'republic' and third, total, unconditional and irreversible withdrawal of all US military personnel serving US 'imperialism' on Khmer territory.[60]

And without Sihanouk, the US and the Chinese had no leverage either on the Khmer Rouge or even the Lon Nol forces. In an assessment on 4 August 1973 Kissinger summed it all up accordingly:

'We have suffered a tragedy because of Watergate ...(in early April) we were going to bomb North Vietnam for a week, then go to Russia, then meet with Le Duc Tho. The Congress has made it impossible ... the Chinese offered to act as intermediary. Now the Chinese lose if the Khmer Rouge win because Sihanouk loses ... The ideal situation for the Chinese is if the Khmer Rouge need Sihanouk and they can manoeuvre between. But if the Khmer Rouge win anyway ...'[61]

This was perhaps Kissinger's basic miscalculation. There was no room left for diplomacy.

IV : II

HANOI & ITS ALLIES

Hanoi was watching all developments closely. The increase in US military pressure, it pronounced on 4 July, was obvious-ly closely related to 'recent domestic developments'.[62] It was generally known, Hanoi continued, that the day Washington intensified its bombing in Cambodia was also the day President Nixon, in defiance of the US people's aspirations used his right of veto to reject the US Congressional bill barring all spending for US military activities in Indochina. Even if a political solution was not reached in Cambodia after 15 August, Hanoi warned that Nixon could still request Congressional assistance should further military action be required for a political solution to the Cambodian problem.

But there were other events in North Vietnam. According to a report dated 6 July 1973 party commissars and local military commanders had 'recently met' to review achievements and to discuss new tasks for the 'new situation'.[63] Also significant was Hanoi's indication to Le Monde on 7 July 1973 that the 4th Congress of the VWP might be convened after an 'initial delay' of 5-12 months.[64] (The 4th Congress did not take place in the event until December 1976.) As the first congress to be convened after the death of Ho Chi Minh in September 1969, it would be an 'historical event': to concern itself with redressing economic developments with a

Three-Year Plan, reinforcement of national defence and the formation of a 'New Socialist Man'. No change in the core of the Hanoi leadership was envisaged however.

Most important of all was the official announcement made on 2 July that Le Duan and Pham Van Dong were scheduled to visit Moscow in the 'middle of July'.[65] Following Brezhnev's visit to Washington (18-25 June) the Soviet leadership began to place more stress on detente and the DRV Party and Government's visit (9-16 July) to the Soviet Union was seen by Moscow in the context of the 'improvement of Soviet-US relations'. Both the US and the USSR, Moscow said, shared a 'special responsibility' for preventing another war since their relations had become 'immeasurably more important than ever in the past'.[66]

At the banquet for the North Vietnamese, Brezhnev pursued this theme in his first public address delivered after his return from Washington. His meeting on 10 July with Le Duan and Pham Van Dong was characterised as a 'special one'.[67] It occurred at a time when the war was over and a 'new climate' was being established worldwide with the trend toward peace and detente 'increasingly gaining ground'. The war in Vietnam was not however a mere regional matter. Brezhnev saw it as profoundly affecting the interests of many states worldwide. Practical steps, he declared, should be taken not only towards political but also military detente as part of the construction of the 'edifice of

peace' in Southeast Asia and on the Asian continent as a whole.

Although the 'victory' of the Vietnamese comrades had been consolidated in the 'important document' of the Paris Agreement, Brezhnev renewed his call for the 'advance' to 'peaceful reunification'. The desire to impose one's rules on others, he stressed, was alien to socialist countries.Revolutions were not for export. Cooperation between the Soviet Union and North Vietnam was to be extended, but in the context of the new era of peace. The Soviet leader expressed solidarity with the PRG but observed that the close of the war gave further impetus for the establishment of cooperation among all Asian states 'without exception'.

In the wider context Brezhnev described his meeting with the Hanoi leaders as being held at a 'turning point' both as regards the development of the situation in Southeast Asia and the international situation as a whole. He expressed interest in the DRV and the USSR's 'joint work' which might raise Soviet-Vietnamese friendship to a 'new level' and extend the scope of cooperation in all major fields. It could make an effective contribution to the strengthening of their 'common great revolutionary achievement', the world socialist system. Future Soviet aid to Hanoi would therefore be directed towards 'fullscale' economic cooperation and the rehabilitation of the war-devastated economy. Moscow would henceforth regard all economic and military aid given during the war as 'assistance given free'.[68]

Hanoi had not however lost sight of its ultimate objective. Le Duan on the same occasion insisted that the Vietnamese people were fully resolved to continue the just struggle at the 'new stage' until its 'last brilliant victory'.[69] Invoking a Vietnamese proverb, 'When you drink water, think of its source', Le Duan attributed the 'glorious victories' of the Vietnamese revolution to the CPSU, the Soviet Government and people acting in the 'spirit of noble internationalism'. There was no reference to the Chinese. While Brezhnev dwelt on the gains of peaceful coexistence, the North Vietnamese leader condemned the US by name for infringing the Paris Agreement.

The talks ended, none the less, on the lines envisaged by Brezhnev. The Joint Communique issued on 17 July 1973 granted new Soviet economic aid for North Vietnam's post-war reconstruction.[70] Hanoi for its part, pledged 'full respect and undeviating fulfilment' of the Paris ceasefire accords and both sides endorsed strict fulfilment of the Agreement on Laos. Soviet endorsement of Vietnamese views on Cambodia was also evident in the Communique: a declaration of 'solidarity' with the anti-government 'patriotic forces' but no public mention was made of the desirability of a ceasefire there.

Although high defence officials took part in the talks on both sides, including A.A.Grechko, USSR Minister of Defence and Tran Sam, DRV Deputy Minister of National Defence,

no new Soviet military aid to Hanoi was mentioned in the Communique.

Between the lines, the declaration hinted at policy differences. The North Vietnamese gave no more than lukewarm endorsement for the Soviet policy of detente, and Moscow, on its part, gave modest support to Hanoi's goal of reunifying North and South Vietnam. While each lavished praise on the other for political and military achievements, the joint communique made clear that the main purpose of Le Duan and Pham Van Dong's visit was to arrange for postwar economic aid. Moscow would supply Hanoi with an assortment of industrial, agricultural and transportation equipment, consumer goods and foodstuffs needed for reconstruction in 1974. At the same time Moscow expressed its readiness to restore facilities built with Soviet help ravaged by war and to assist in building new industrial enterprises including hydroelectric power plants.

All this must be seen in the context of Sino-Soviet relations and of a Kremlin report dated 13 July 1973 by leading Soviet ideologue Mikhail Suslov made while Le Duan was still in Moscow.[71] Suslov said the CPSU saw its 'internationalist duty' in the defence, development and affirmation of the Leninist doctrine of the Party. The CPSU, he declared had consistently fought for the 'political and ideological cohesion' of the international communist movement. Suslov's report was particularly sharp in its criticism of the Chinese, who were 'embarking on a course hostile to the CPSU, the soc-

ialist community and the world communist movement', and were supporting 'all kinds of reactionary regimes and forces' with the aim of weakening the international positions of socialism. To counter this, Suslov pointedly remarked, the twin policy of the CPSU and the Soviet state was to wage a 'determined ideological and political struggle' against Mao and at the same time call for normal interstate relations with the PRC.

At the conclusion of the North Vietnamese delegation's visit on 19 July, Moscow issued a scathing critique of Peking's 'negative attitude' towards peaceful settlement of the war.[72] As we have seen earlier, 19 July was the date of the collapse of Kissinger's plan to visit Peking in August and also marked the opening of the national congress of the Khmer Rouge in the interior (See p.248). 'Objective facts', Moscow said, had demonstrated that Peking had by no means given up its 'provocative activities' which were 'contrary' to the interests of the Indochinese people. The proof was that the Chinese leaders had stubbornly favoured the US military presence in Southeast Asia to keep up tension and conflict there.

It is conceivable that the Soviet objective at this stage was already to welcome the DRV as a member of COMECON (the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance or CMEA). Suslov on 13 July described the 'fraternal alliance of the socialist community' as the greatest achievement of the post

-war period.[73] It was in fact 'multiplying its efforts' to advance the 'economic integration' of the countries of the socialist camp. No effort was spared to strengthen further their equally fraternal political alliance. With reference to COMECON, Suslov said enormous longterm sources of the 'growth of socialist production' were to be found in the 'international division of labour' and in the economic integration of the socialist countries.

With more direct relevance to Vietnam, Suslov added that the CPSU consistently pursued a policy of assistance to those fighting their national wars of liberation. At the present time however the 'resistance to international detente' had still not been completely overcome. 'Hotbeds of tension' still existed. In contrast to Brezhnev, Suslov said that the 'ideological struggle' between socialism and capitalism was 'particularly acute' and that there could be no peaceful coexistence.

Hanoi appeared at this stage to be taking Suslov's advice and was strengthening its ties with some members of the Warsaw Pact and COMECON. At the end of the Moscow talks Pham Van Dong visited Hungary, Poland and Rumania while Le Duan remained in the Soviet Union. Meanwhile Moscow was preparing for an eight-nation summit of Eastern European party leaders scheduled for 30-31 July in the Crimea. The Oreanda Estate of Brezhnev was to be the seat of a 'friendly meeting/

to discuss questions of 'further development and cooperation' among the countries and international problems.[74] The meeting called for 'vigilance' against the forces using relaxation of international tension to undermine the position of socialism. The emphasis of the 31 July 1973 communique was to endorse Brezhnev's policy of accomodation with the West. As far as Vietnam was concerned, the statement called for the adherence 'by all sides' to the Vietnam ceasefire agreement and an indirect call for settlement in Cambodia as well.[75] It was an endorsement of Brezhnev's speech of 10 July welcoming the North Vietnamese.

In separate talks between Le Duan and Brezhnev in the Crimea on 4 August, the 'further development' of relations between the CPSU and the VWP and between the two governments was discussed.[76] Brezhnev also informed Le Duan about the results of the Warsaw Pact meeting of 30-31 July, whose communique, it was later revealed, had contained a passage expressing 'invariable support' for the stand of the DRV and the PRG demanding 'strict observance' of the Paris Agreement by all parties.[77]

While the North Vietnamese leaders were travelling in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade Ivan Grishin signed a separate agreement on 1 August 1973 in Moscow with Dang Quang Minh, the Ambassador of the PRG.[78] The Soviet Union promised, according to this agreement, to provide the new Saigon with machinery and

equipment, foodstuffs, medicines and consumer goods after the war had been ended and peace had been restored in Vietnam. The agreement was a manifestation of Soviet intent and preparedness to secure its influence in the South before other interested powers.

By the same token, Moscow's drive to expand its economic partnership with Hanoi was accelerated on 14 August at a meeting between Pham Van Dong and Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin.[79] Following this meeting fresh agreements were signed on postwar Soviet reconstruction aid for 1974-75. Moscow was to help in the development of coal and electric power industries, in road building and geological prospecting.

In Hanoi however the prominence given immediately after Le Duan's Moscow visit, to a resolution attributed to him, signified the ascendancy of his line. The Central Military Party Committee revealed on 17 July 1973 that a conference had been held to discuss the implementation of the Politburo's resolution in the 'new phase'.[80] The situation in the armed forces had in fact been assessed and a conference of commanders of various military regions affiliated with the General Staff, convened under the chairmanship of Vo Nguyen Giap, Defence Minister to discuss the Politburo's resolution and the 'talks of Comrade Le Duan'. The participants had 'unanimously expressed' absolute confidence in the Party's line concerning the cadres' task to cooperate with the arm-

ed forces to implement the resolution. This is corroborated by a later military publication, The Anti-US Resistance War for National Salvation according to which the Standing Committee of the Interzone Party Committee and the Military Region 5 Party Committee met in July and August 1973 to 'promptly bring about a strong transformation' in the situation.[81]

While indications in Hanoi pointed to a possible renewal of conflict, the initiatives pursued in July and August 1973 by Japan towards both North and South Vietnam suggested a desire for a stabilisation of the peace there.

IV : III

JAPAN'S 'BLUEPRINT'

'In regard to reconstruction aid for Indochina, the US side has been informally requesting, from before, Japan's fulfilling a big role. It is said that the US side once again made a similar request at the US-Japan Economic Conference this time too. In the Joint Communique and in other documents, the expression used is 'Indochina aid'. However, the US side is especially strongly demanding the Japanese side's aid for the reconstruction of South Vietnam, and the situation today is that Prime Minister Tanaka will be forced to present the Japanese side's basic plan for aid to South Vietnam to President Nixon.'

Nihon Keizai Shimbun,

22 July 1973*

* in DSJP, 24 July 1973, p.23.

The emergence of closer USSR-DRV relations and the breakdown of the US-China dialogue concerning Cambodia appeared to have no immediate impact on Japan's policy of restoring diplomatic relations with Hanoi. Early normalisation of such relations was deemed essential since the 'stabilisation' of the peace in Indochina was one dimension of Japan's Southeast Asian diplomacy.

Preliminary negotiations with North Vietnam had in fact been proposed on 4 July 1973 for the second half of July when the Tokyo Government made representations to Hanoi through its Paris Embassy.[82] 'Objective conditions' such as the signature of the 13 June communique, the reconvening of the US-DRV Joint Economic Commission and the Cambodian bombing halt scheduled for 15 August suggested to Tokyo that the prevailing situation in Indochina had stabilised to a certain degree. The time had come for establishing diplomatic relations with Hanoi.

Two outstanding problems remained. One was the recognition of the PRG. Tokyo's continued reluctance to recognise it was construed by Hanoi as an obstacle to improved relations. Nguyen Van Hieu, the PRG's representative at the La Celle-St Cloud political talks condemned Japan's refusal to recognise his government on the grounds that it had 'no capital city' as a blatant excuse. However the entry into Japan of four key PRG officials for three weeks from 8 July was taken as an expression of goodwill on the part of the Tokyo government.[83]

The other problem was Hanoi's insistence on reparations and its continued refusal to accept Tokyo's position that payment of this nature had already been made to South Vietnam. The Japanese Foreign Ministry remained adamant that reparations had been settled through the conclusion of the 1959 agreement which bestowed US$39 million in Saigon. This

question ultimately involved the settlement with the DRV of non-reimbursable economic cooperation. Where the transportation of US weapons to South Vietnam was concerned, no big problems would remain if the US strictly maintained the Paris Agreement's protocols and limited its transportation to the 'substitutes' permitted.

Despite these problems the Foreign Ministry had begun by 9 July a fullscale inquiry into a plan for the extension of aid for the reconstruction of Indochina as a whole.[84] It focused on the form of aid to be extended, with the Ministry expressing preference for the 'bilateral formula' also favoured by Hanoi. The framework of such aid would include a considerable amount of non-reimbursable funds deliberately formulated as a direct response to Hanoi's requests. The question of the separation of reparations from aid continued to plague Ohira's ministry. The political aspects of this question, it was hoped might be resolved by the extension of non-reimbursable funds which might be an adequate substitute for reparations.

Japan in the meantime did not neglect its relations with South Vietnam. The Foreign Ministry announced on 13 July that a nine-member government mission headed by Motono Moriyuki would make a two-week tour of South Vietnam (19-28 July) and Laos (29 July-3 August) to study Japan's rehabilitation aid.[85] The survey mission was to be conducted in parallel with the commencement of the Paris negotiations

for the early settlement of diplomatic relations with North Vietnam. Consultations with the various agencies concerned - the Foreign and Finance ministries, MITI and the Economic Planning Agency (EPA) - would entail a study of South Vietnam's own reconstruction plans.

The formulation of Japan's policies however continued to rest on periodic consultations with Washington. Tanaka stressed on 12 July that he would take the opportunity of personally informing Nixon that Japan would contribute US $50 million through the UN in longterm aid to rehabilitate Vietnam in addition to bilateral assistance to the countries of Indochina, when the two leaders met in Washington at the end of July. At the 9th meeting of the Japan-US Joint Committee on Trade and Economic Affairs held in Tokyo on 16-17 July, US Secretary of State William Rogers referred in his opening speech to the US-Japan alliance as having been a 'critical element' in the evolution of a more peaceful and cooperative Asia in which both nations had a vital interest. He noted with enthusiasm Tanaka's call for a conference of the Asia-Pacific nations adding that there was room for Japan to assume a 'greater sense of responsibility' for the promotion of peace and stability in Asia.[86]

Rogers emphasised in particular the 'special significance' of the mutual commitments undertaken by China with Japan and the US, to renounce ambitions of hegemony in Asia

and to 'resist attempts by others' to impose such hegemony. Peace in Indochina remained a great concern for the US and the reduced hostilities in the area, Rogers said, made it possible for Washington to turn its attention to the essential tasks of reconstruction and development. Japan's continued close cooperation was much valued. Japanese economic assistance would be an essential ingredient in achieving 'peace and stability' in the four Indochinese countries in the postwar era. Japan would be an 'essential participant' in the postwar rehabilitation and development of Indochina through the formation of an international aid donor's group advocated by the
87
World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).
In this respect Rogers commended Japan for its 'leadership role' in building the ADB into a distinguished regional institution and said the US remained committed to multilateral economic assistance through international financial institutions. World Bank President Robert McNamara, Rogers disclosed, had in fact responded to a request from Nguyen Van Thieu to investigate the possibility of establishing an aid consultative group for South Vietnam. We now know that after McNamara visited Japan in April, World Bank missions went to Vietnam in May and June (see p. 220). ADB President Inoue Shiro moreover was eager to let the ADB play a major role in postwar Indochina. The US therefore proposed to Congress a supplemental US$630.9 mill-

ion programme for fiscal 73 for Indochina postwar reconstruction, about half of which would be for commodity import programmes in South Vietnam and Cambodia. The balance would be for humanitarian assistance, reconstruction and development and in the case of Cambodia and Laos, economic stabilisation.[88]

At the Tokyo meeting opinions were exchanged on US-Japan relations with the aim of laying the groundwork for the impending summit talks between Tanaka and Nixon in Washington. The Joint Communique of 17 July 1973 reaffirmed that it was an important task for developed countries to assist in the economic and social development of developing countries 'bilaterally and through multilateral financial organisations'.[89] Japan urged the US to 'expand its aid particularly in the Asian area' and noted especially the importance of the proposed US contribution to the special funds as well as the proposed increase in the capital subscription of the ADB. It expressed its own intention to continue to expand both the 'geographic and functional scope' of the Japanese aid programme and to endeavour to improve the quality and amount of Japan's official development assistance.[90] The communique also emphasised the 'recent developments' designed to bring peace throughout Indochina, hoping that an 'enduring solution' might 'soon be achieved there'.

As a result of the conference, economic relations between Japan and the US, Ohira said on 17 July, had entered a

'new phase' in the global context. The question now was how to share the responsibility for the reconstruction of Indochina within the framework of the new pattern of international relations. During the talks with Ohira, Rogers revealed that the amount of US aid to developing countries totalled US$7,400 million including US$3,300 million earmarked for government development aid for 1972. At the New International Round scheduled for the autumn, developing countries' benefits would be taken into consideration. The aim was to reach some agreement on an international currency reform by September 1973 when the World Bank's General Meeting would be held in Nairobi. A major role by the World Bank and the ADB in the reconstruction of Indochina was therefore 'desirable'. Economic aid to North Vietnam would be extended on condition that it abided by the Paris Agreement.

Indochina reconstruction aid, a government source revealed on 21 July, would be taken up as one of the 'major agenda items' by Tanaka in his Washington talks with Nixon on 31 July. It began to appear that Washington was particularly concerned about aid to South Vietnam, since Saigon was demanding aid amounting to US$800 million a year. The difference between this demand and US disbursements might have to be compensated by contributions from other aid donor nations, including Japan. It was speculated in some quarters that Jap-

an, which had thus far expressed the desire only to fulfil a role supplementary to that of the US, might now make the 'second biggest contribution' after the US.[92] Depending on Japan's commitment, the European nations would decide on their contributions. A definitive Japanese statement to this effect would be sought at the Tanaka-Nixon summit talks. While talks on US postwar economic assistance to Hanoi were continuing in Paris, detailed discussion on the reconstruction of Indochina with emphasis on US-Japan cooperation would be held in Tokyo on 23-24 July by US State and AID officials.[93]

For this reason Tokyo was pressing throughout the latter half of July for coordination among the various government agencies concerned, particularly Foreign Affairs and Finance. The Motono survey team, as we have seen, was already in South Vietnam from 19 July to study the feasibility of aid.By 19 July the following principles were formulated in Tokyo: 1) The extension of aid would focus on US-Japan cooperation, 2) The aid recipients would be the four nations of Indochina - North Vietnam, South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, 3) Aid under the multilateral formula would be extended through the UN, the ADB and the World Bank; the bilateral aid formula would also be promoted individually between Japan and its recipients.[94] Washington's 'great expectation' for Japan's role in this respect was attributed in some quarters to the indifference of Congress towards the aid question. The US

Senate for instance had reduced by half the US$740 million requested in the fiscal 74 budget.

Japan's dialogue with North Vietnam in Paris was simul-taneously showing signs of promise. Ohira revealed on 24 July 1973 that Hanoi had proposed 'two or three days ago' to begin fullscale negotiations from 25 July in Paris at the two nations' embassies at the same time.[95] The first round of negotiations would be held between the Japanese Minister in France, Tokuhisa Shigeru and the North Vietnamese Chargé d'Affaires, Nguyen Tran Lieu. Ohira appeared hopeful that these negotiations could be brought to a settlement 'by the autumn'. The agenda would focus on 1) the reparations problem, 2) the issue of Japanese economic aid to North Vietnam, 3) the question of the PRG. Tokyo's policy of offering economic aid to North Vietnam 'both with and without reimbursement' as distinct from reparations Ohira explained, was because Hanoi had 'no intention' to claim reparations from Japan. The specific content of aid was expected to be discussed during fullscale negotiations.[96]

Hanoi for its part stressed three demands in Paris on 25 July: 1) An end to the transportation of weapons for the US forces in Japan to Vietnam and Cambodia, 2) Non-reimbursable aid instead of reparations for the losses of World War II, 3) Recognition of the PRG.[97] With reference to the first point, Tokyo said the issue could be 'naturally dissolved'

through the ceasefire in Vietnam and the stabilisation of the situation in Cambodia. While Tokyo was ready to advance non-reimbursable aid as demanded by Hanoi, recognition of the PRG was not immediately possible. 'No serious obstacles' however were envisaged for the future.

The conclusion of the first session of the DRV-Japan talks in Paris on 26 July left Tanaka, Ohira and Nikaido ready to discuss the various aspects of Japan's Indochina policy in Washington. The extension of the aid programme was founded on three principles: 1) Aid to South Vietnam would be distinct and would operate on a different level because of the nature of Saigon's individual requests, 2) Aid after 1974 would be dependent on the deliberations of an aid-giving nations conference to be sponsored by the World Bank-ADB group; it was hoped that Japan would eventually extend aid on a bilateral basis to Indochina within the framework outlined by the conference, 3) Tokyo would extend aid to North Vietnam on a bilateral basis while maintaining a balance between the amount of aid to be given to South Vietnam and that earmarked for the North.[98]

Already it was envisaged that the first preliminary talks on these principles might begin 'as early as September' for the express purpose of establishing the aid-giving nations' conference. The World Bank and AID would officiate with Manila, the ADB's headquarters, named as a possible location for the

talks. The World Bank and the ADB would act as the promoter and coordinator of aid for the postwar reconstruction of Indochina, in place of the US, inviting the participation of some 20 countries beginning with the US and Japan and including France, West Germany and the Netherlands. The intention was to draw up a survey report in August prior to the aid conference in September 1973.

The ADB was also said on 26 July to have sent its own survey team to South Vietnam in the interim and would use its findings to create a 'blue-print' for reconstruction and development aid to South Vietnam 'far into the future'.[99] The results of the survey would lay the foundations of the proposed conference which would discuss: 1) The total amount of aid to be extended to South Vietnam in 1974, the share of aid to be borne by various nations, as well as that given by international organs, and 2) a 'longterm structure' for the extension of aid to the whole of Indochina including Laos and Cambodia with the amounts of aid to be given to these nations. Both the World Bank and the ADB moreover expressly included North Vietnam as an aid-recip -ient although Hanoi was not a member of either institution.

For the South, Tanaka revealed on 27 July prior to his departure for Washington that Japan was already implementing Vietnam reconstruction aid and had disbursed Yen 500 million through an undisclosed international organ, having also agreed

to an enormous capital subscription to the ADB.[100] The intention was for Japan itself to make 'unconditional' capital subscription in contrast to aid extended through the UN.

Tanaka's Washington visit (31 July-1 August) was intended to inaugurate a phase of Japan's summit diplomacy which would also take in Europe, the USSR and Southeast Asia. He hoped to promote a 'new triangular relationship' between Japan, the US and Europe as endorsed in the New Atlantic Charter and to initiate the 'fullest possible dialogue' between Tokyo and Washington. Tanaka would take the opportunity to invite Nixon to Japan in the spring of 1974 and would reschedule the US visit of Emperor Hirohito which Tokyo had cancelled in late April.[101] Tanaka wanted to demonstrate Japan's commitment to its increasing international role and responsibility, against the background of 'great changes' in the international environment in recent months. These included the normalisation of Japan-China relations, the ceasefire in Vietnam and progress in US-China relations as well as the Nixon-Brezhnev summit.

Tanaka's discussions with fellow heads of government would explore the feasibility of a conference of Asian and Pacific nations including the US, China and the Soviet Union, on means of bolstering the peace settlement in Indochina as endorsed by Rogers in Tokyo in mid-July. While the antiwar Constitution prevented Japan from accepting a mili-

tary role in peacekeeping arrangements, the Premier said, Tokyo would participate in economic cooperation and would supply technology to developing countries.[102]

During his Washington visit Tanaka said the task of creating a 'durable peace' for both the US and Japan was a 'grand undertaking'. The US could not 'unilaterally' solve the scope of its problems worldwide but resolution might be possible through 'close collaboration' between Japan, the US and Europe. As a major industrial power Japan, Tanaka said, was prepared to contribute the full measure of its capacity to this common cause. Specifically bilateral issues between the US and Japan would be reviewed within a wider global perspective.

According to Nixon the Joint US-Japan Communique of 1 August 1973 would support Tokyo's efforts to gain permanent membership of the UN Security Council alongside the US, the Soviet Union, China, Britain and France.[103] The communique expressed the 'strong hope' where Indochina was concerned that both nations would work towards a stable lasting peace through 'scrupulous implementation' of the Paris Agreement. They also reaffirmed their resolve to assist the rehabilitation of Indochina and pledged to continue to facilitate regional cooperation in Asia as an important contributing factor in securing a 'lasting peace' throughout that part of the world.

Almost immediately Tokyo disclosed on 2 August that

US$50 million had been set aside for these purposes in the fiscal 73 supplementary budget.[104] The decision was made in line with a promise Tanaka had given Nixon in Washington. Japan however would extend aid to both North and South Vietnam despite the US' preference for Saigon to be the only recipient.

IV : IV

THE OIL FACTOR

'We have wasted long years in war, now we should immediately set our hands to reconstruction.'

Nguyen Van Thieu,
20 May 1973.

At this point we must look at another aspect of the economic potential of Indochina. Vietnam was increasingly being viewed as a promising source of oil. Attention had been drawn to the possible oil wealth of the South in a speech of 20 May 1973 by Nguyen Van Thieu.[105] Vietnam's abundant natural resources, he said, were 'only partially exploited'. The RVN moreover, controlled the territory where those resources were likely to be most abundant. Economic development could not be allowed to wait until the gunfire had 'completely ceased' and must be prosecuted while South Vietnam's

territorial security was still being maintained by arms. As the danger of the 'renewal of war' appeared to be receding, the RVN, Thieu declared, should be able to take more manpower from security tasks to reconstruction tasks. This was perhaps a reference to the reduced level of hostilities on the ground and to the then ongoing Paris talks (17 - 23 May) in which a new ceasefire was being discussed.

Thieu simultaneously unveiled an eight-year reconstruction programme designed to cover the years 1973-80.[106] During the first phase (1973-75) the Saigon Government would call for maximum assistance from foreign governments and international financial institutions. Foreign business circles would be encouraged to join forces with local entrepreneurs. An attractive and progressive investment law had been promulgated in April 1973 and all facilities would be accorded to foreign investors to ensure that rapid and largescale development took place. Oil exploitation was a prominent part of the programme.

According to Nguyen Tien Hung, Thieu had originally placed much emphasis on American economic support until his visit to the US in early April 1973.[107] Aid would gradually be reduced from the level of more than US$1 billion in 1975 to US$100 million in 1980. But with no firm commitments forthcoming from Nixon or the World Bank, Thieu was forced to reassess the situation: it was then that he suggested to Hung that the latter contribute to the economic recon-

struction of the country. Arriving in Saigon in May 1973, Hung was offered on 5 June the post of Special Assistant for Economic Reconstruction 'coordinating reconstruction aid and overall economic and financial policy'.[108] On 7 June Thieu signed the decree appointing Hung who was sent in ambassadorial rank to Washington until mid-August where he visited the State Department, AID and the Pentagon.[109]

Dependent on imports for 90% of its oil consumption, Japan was preoccupied under the impact of diminishing global energy reserves, with the need to ensure a stable supply of crude oil. MITI disclosed on 18 May that Japan was in the process of drawing up a new oil policy which it expected to finalise 'before the end of July'.[110] Under this policy Japan proposed to encourage the refining of oil locally by oil-producing countries and Third World developing nations. The prospect of oil reserves nearer home in Vietnam was thus of keen interest to Japan. The search for alternative energy resources was also advocated by a government resources mission. It proposed on 19 June after a visit to the US, that Japan not rely unduly on the Middle East for its oil but develop such resources 'outside OPEC' (Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries).[111]

By mid-1973 Japanese firms were already moving to bid for concessions in the oil exploration area off South Vietnam. Saigon invited bids on 2 July from international oil companies for concessions to be awarded on the advice of its National

Petroleum Commission (NPC). Kaiyo Oil for instance entered bids for three areas in conjunction with the US firms, Gulf, Amoco and Amerada Hess.[112] Depending on the bidding, the results were expected to be announced in mid-August, a reminder of developments concerning aid.

The Saigon Government was offering as much as 30 continental shelf mining areas, amounting to some 300,000 sq.km. off the Mekong Delta and would receive US$16.6 million as soon as the oil concession rights were awarded. Called 'signature commission', the money manifested the companies' commitment to explore and exploit oil. Those awarded concessions would invest US$60 million in the search for oil over five years, an amount higher than the minimum of US$12 million fixed by the government for the bid. Beginning in 1974 the companies would earmark US$300,000 per year for the training of Vietnamese specialists and personnel in the oil branch. Employment during the five-year period would comprise 90% Vietnamese manpower including 60% at managerial level.

The Saigon Government stood to gain some US$10 million once oil was found. According to the Oil Law it would also receive 12.5% of the total volume of the oil extracted and 55% of the income derived from its exploitation and production.[113] Concession contracts were expected to be signed in August after which the search for oil would begin in February 1974. More bids would then follow.

'The snag was that Saigon's 'open-door' policy might easily

provoke a violent reaction on the part of Hanoi. Thieu had observed in his speech of 20 May that the communists would 'seek by all means' to sabotage South Vietnam's economic advance. On 5 July Hanoi accused Saigon of 'selling out' the country's natural resources to the petroleum organisations of foreign capital.[114] Pointing to a 24 February 1971 statement of the PRG Foreign Ministry, Hanoi declared that all natural resources of South Vietnam belonged to its people through their 'only general and legal representative', the PRG. On 18 July Liberation Radio issued a further angry statement in response to an announcement by Saigon that eight exploration blocks had been awarded off the coast of Vung Tau to firms including Esso, Mobil and the Pecten Vietnam Company of Shell.[115] On 20 July Liberation Press condemned the oil concessions as contravening the letter and spirit of the Paris Agreement.[116]

The exploration of oil in South Vietnam was also related to the military situation there. The new US Ambassador to the RVN, Graham Martin, who arrived in July 1973, later described the situation at the time as in a 'basic stalemate' with the military initiative increasingly going to the South Vietnamese forces.[117] There had been a massive military supply before the accord in the 'Enhance Programme' designed to leave the ARVN forces equipped and prepared to resist external aggression. US authorities had then concluded that Saigon would be successful here if Hanoi did not

receive massive support from outside sources.

Hanoi was itself facing possible prospects for oil development. The DRV's attitude to any possible foreign participation in its own oil development appeared defensive in the extreme. On 22 June 1973 the General Geology Department of the DRV was reported to have drawn up a new plan for fulfilling its military tasks in the 'new stage'.[118] A consolidation of self-defence units and the 'heightening' of vigilance and 'combat readiness' was deemed essential. There was nevertheless, a possible precedent in the case of China. From 24 May to 17 June engineers of the Nippon Kokkan Company had held talks with the relevant authorities in China on the technicalities of laying oil pipelines.[119] Although no concrete programme was agreed on, the possibility had arisen that Japan might export pipelines to China and might even participate in a fullscale project to help the Chinese establish a pipeline network from the Daqing oilfield to their inland refineries. And what Japan could achieve in China it might reasonably hope to do for North Vietnam as well. By the latter half of 1973 Japan was not merely exhibiting an interest in Vietnamese oil resources, but was positioning itself to act as a politically acceptable partner in oil exploration for a future unified Vietnam.

The question of a stable supply of resources as we have seen, had been one of the issues of central concern at the Joint Japan-US Committee on Trade and Economic Affairs

in Tokyo (16-17 July). Secretary Rogers stressed that the US understood the 'special concerns' which arose from Japan's dependence on imported sources of energy and placed a priority on the expansion and strengthening of cooperation with Japan in energy matters.[120] The final communique of 17 July affirmed the importance of a 'continuing and broad exchange of views' by the US and Japan on the problem of ensuring future supplies of petroleum, enriched uranium and other energy resources.[121]

The challenge of natural resources as a 'new source of tension' was again referred to in the Nixon-Tanaka talks (31July -1 August). Fearing that an energy crisis might see competition for dwindling supplies, both leaders agreed to examine an arrangement within the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for 'sharing oil in times of emergency' and to expand the scope of cooperation for exploring and exploiting energy resources and for research and development of new energy sources.[122]

Japanese business and industrial circles affirmed on 7 August that the Joint Communique of the Nixon-Tanaka talks had provided the main impetus for an aid strategy for Indochina.[123] In specific response to requests from the 'local' side, an overall reconstruction aid and cooperation organ would be established to become the 'window' for formulating private-level plans focusing on the Keidanran (Federation of Economic Organisations). Largescale missions would be sent to North and South Vietnam,

Cambodia and Laos possibly 'next spring'.

In this context Mitsui, a major Japanese trading concern, was reported on 23 June 1973 to have drafted a programme for the construction of a gigantic industrial zone along Cam Ranh Bay.[124] This was in response to a request by the Nguyen Van Thieu government in the autumn of 1972 for a 'blueprint' for a heavy chemical-industrial complex at the site of the former US supply base. Petroleum refining facilities with an initial production capacity of 100,000 barrels a day would form the nucleus of the project, to be a part of Thieu's eight-year reconstruction programme.

Japan, the US and other nations were expected to contribute to an undisclosed cost of building the complex. Mitsui was drafting its plans with the cooperation of two Japanese construction companies, the Japan Industrial Location Centre and Nihon Koei. What was significant was that Mitsui's blueprint for the complex was to be submitted to the South Vietnamese Government in 'August 1973'.[125]

By mid-August 1973 Japan's own fact-finding mission to South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos led by Motono Moriyuki had returned to Tokyo. A statement on 13 August said the RVN requested approximately US$62 million for aid in 1973.[126] On the basis of its report Tokyo would hold the first coordinating meeting of the ministries concerned to formulate on 15 August a concrete aid programme. A supplementary budget would then be presented to an extraordinary Diet session scheduled for mid-October and the provision of aid might commence that month.

It emerged at the 15 August meeting that the South Vietnamese Government had asked for a total of US$124 million in foreign aid as 'urgent necessities' for the half year beginning July 1973. While this would be studied at the coordination meeting, Tokyo expressed the desire to send an equivalent team to the DRV - with which it was still engaged in negotiations for diplomatic relations - and eventually to Cambodia following stabilisation of the situation there.

These developments might be understood in retrospect. According to Kissinger in March 1974, Japan suggested in August 1973 that the World Bank 'arrange a preliminary meeting to exchange views on aid to the countries of Indochina' (Appendix III). Tokyo also proposed that 'member countries discuss the formation of a loose Indochina consultative group for the areawide coordination, with subgroups for any of the four countries concerned which might request such a group.' This might conceivably explain why Japan's initiatives in Vietnam accelerated towards the middle of August 1973.

By mid-August 1973 the momentum generated by Japan's role in the stabilisation of Vietnam was clear. But Nixon's draining power from late April 1973 on account of Watergate and his consequent inability to enforce a stricter implementation of the ceasefire on the ground in South Vietnam would have more serious consequences later on in the year. Already

in mid-June when the new communique was renegotiated, the absence of new tougher clauses to prevent a further deterioration of the situation there gave no hope for optimism. In Cambodia the failure to secure a ceasefire and the collapse of the negotiated settlement were ominous. These, together with the ascendancy of the radicals in the maquis augured badly for the future.

Mid-August 1973 thus marked a transition in the overall situation in Indochina in which the pattern of initiatives, both diplomatic and economic, and the involvement of outside powers would henceforth take a different form. The framework for peace would also become increasingly fragmented.

USA	JAPAN	SOUTH VIETNAM	NORTH VIETNAM
	4 July: Tokyo proposes talks with Hanoi on normalisation in Paris.	3 July: Saigon opens bids for oil concessions.	
	6 July, Paris: Nguyen Van Hieu condemns Japan's refusal to recognise PRG.		
	8 July: PRG officials admitted into Japan.		
	9 July: Foreign Ministry begins fullscale enquiry into plan for reconstruction aid for Indochina.		9-16 July: Le Duan and Pham Van Dong visit the USSR.
	12 July: Tanaka to personally inform Nixon that Japan would contribute US$50 million through the UN to rehabilitate Vietnam.		
	16-17 July: Ninth Meeting of Japan-US Joint Committee on Trade and Economic Affairs.	16 July: Saigon oil deal. 17 July: Oil concessions to western companies.	17 July: Joint USSR-DRV Communique.
	19 July: Tokyo formulates principles on Indochina aid.	19-28 July: Motono Moriyuki mission in South Vietnam.	
	24 July: Ohira revealed that Hanoi proposed 'two to three days ago' that fullscale negotiations begin in Paris at respective embassies.		
	25 July: Hanoi's three demands still stand..		
	26 July: Tanaka & Ohira ready to discuss Indochina aid policy in Washington.		
30 July-1 August, Washington: Nixon-Tanaka talks. 1 August 1973: Joint US-Japan Communique.			
	2 August: Tokyo discloses that US$50 million set aside for rehabilitation assistance to Indochina.		
August 1973: Japan, according to Kissinger, suggests that World Bank arrange preliminary meeting to exchange views on Indochina aid.	7 August: Japanese business and industrial circles affirm that US-Japan Joint Communique main impetus for aid strategy for Indochina.		
Until mid-August: Nguyen Tien Hung in Washington to liaise with the State Department, AID and the Pentagon.	Mid-August 1973: Motono mission returns from South Vietnam; reveals that RVN requested US$124 million in aid from abroad.		

NOTES

CHAPTER IV : I

1. President urges support in search for Cambodian Settlement, 27 June 1973, in DSB, 6 August 1973, p.229; See also HAK II, pp.357-359.

2. HAK II, p.359.

3. Ibid., p.361.

4. Agerpres, 23 June 1973, SWB/EE/4331/A3/1.

5. International Herald Tribune, 2 July 1973.

6. Ibid.,. See also Voice of NUFC, 26 June 1973, SWB/FE/4333/A3/4.

7. AKI in French, 1 July 1973, SWB/FE/4337/A3/1.

8. The New York Times, 7 July 1973.

9. Taniug, 5 July 1973, SWB/FE/4340/i.

10. Le Figaro, 5 July 1973.

11. Taniug, 6 July 1973, SWB/FE/4341/A3/7.

12. HAK II, pp.361-362.

13. Kyodo, 25 June 1973, dispatch from Moscow, SWB/FE/4331/A1/1; See also Le Monde, 24-25 June 1973 and Manac'h, op.cit., p.442.

14. The New York Times, 3 July 1973.

15. Ibid., 7 July 1973.

16. HAK II, pp.362-363.

17. HAK II, p.363; See also The New York Times, 7 July 1973.

18. Manac'h, op.cit., p.449.

19. Phnom Penh Home Service, 6 July 1973, SWB/FE/4341/A3/8.

20. The New York Times, 10 July 1973.

21. HAK II, p.361.

22. The New York Times, 10 July 1973.

23. Manac'h, op.cit., p.455.

24. Ibid., pp.448-450.

25. Ibid., p.576.

26. Ibid., p.577.

27. Ibid., p.437.

28. Ibid., p 578.

29. Ibid., p.451.

30. Ibid., p.447.

31. HAK II, p.364.

32. Ibid., See also Manac'h, op.cit., p.453.

33. HAK II, p.364.

34. Manac'h, op.cit., p.455.

35. AKI, 13 July 1973, SWB/FE/4347/A3/6.

36. Manac'h, op.cit., p.460.

37. NCNA, 20 July 1973, SWB/FE/4353/A3/3.

38. HAK II, p.365.

39. MTI, 17 July 1973, SWB/FE/4351/A2/1.

40. Moscow in Standard Chinese, 15 July 1973, SWB/SU/4349/A3/3.

41. Radio Peace & Progress, in Standard Chinese, 19 July 1973, SWB/SU/4353/A3/1.

42. Ibid.,

43. HAK II, p.364.

44. Ibid., p.365.

45. Ibid.,

46. Ibid., p.366.

47. NCNA, 20 July 1973, SWB/FE/4353/A3/3.

48. Voice of NUFC, 23 July 1973, SWB/FE/4355/A3/3-5.

49. NCNA, 29 July 1973, SWB/FE/4360/A5/2.

50. HAK II, pp.365-367.

51. Ibid., p.362.

52. President Nixon warns of hazards of end of US bombing in Cambodia, in DSB, 27 August 1973; p.304.

53. Secretary Rogers submits Affadavit on Cambodia to Supreme Court, in DSB, 27 August 1973; pp.304-305.

54. Manac'h, op.cit., p.462.

55. Ibid., p.581.

56. Le Monde, 28 July 1973.

57. NCNA, 6 August 1973, SWB/FE/4367/A3/1.

58. Manac'h, op.cit., p.471.

59. KCNA, 12 August 1973, SWB/FE/4372/A3/1-2.

60. Manac'h, op.cit., p.468.

61. HAK II, p.367.

CHAPTER IV : II

62. Hanoi Home Service, 4 July 1973, SWB/FE/4339/A3/3.

63. Ibid., 6 July 1973, SWB/FE/4343/B/3.

64. Le Monde, 7 July 1973.

65. Hanoi Home Service, 2 July 1973, SWB/FE/4336/i.

66. Moscow in English for North America, 9 July 1973, SWB/SU/4343/A3/1-2.

67. Moscow Home Service, 10 July 1973, SWB/SU/4344/A3/1.

68. Ibid., SWB/SU/4344/A3/1-4.

69. Ibid., SWB/SU/4344/A3/5.

70. TASS, 16 July 1973, SWB/SU/4349/A3/8.

71. Moscow Home Service, 13 July 1973, SWB/SU/4348/C/3-5.

72. Radio Peace & Progress, in Standard Chinese, 19 July 1973, SWB/SU/4354/A3/3.

73. Moscow Home Service, 13 July 1973, SWB/SU/4348/C/4.

74. The New York Times, 1 August 1973.

75. Ibid., Moscow Home Service, 29 July 1973, SWB/SU/4360/i.

76. Soviet News, 7 August 1973.

77. Moscow Home Service, 29 July 1973, SWB/SU/4360/i.

78. TASS, 1 August 1973, SWB/SU/4363/A3/4.

79. Moscow Home Service, 13 August 1973, SWB/SU/4373/A3/1.

80. Hanoi Home Service, 17 July 1973, SWB/FE/4350/B/4.

81. Anti-US Resistance War, op.cit., p.160.

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82. Tokyo Shimbun, 7 July 1973, in DSJP, 11 July 1973; p.3.

83. Kyodo, 8 July 1973, SWB/FE/4342/A3/4.

84. Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 9 July 1973, in DSJP, 12 July 1973; p.18.

85. Kyodo, 13 July 1973, SWB/FE/4347/A3/10.

86. Ninth Meeting of the Joint Japan-US Committee on Trade and Economic Affairs, Opening Statement by Secretary Rogers, 16 July 1973, in DSB, 13 August 1973; pp.238-239.

87. Ibid., p.240.

88. Ibid., Statement on Development Aid, 17 July 1973; pp.245-246.

89. Ibid., Text of Final Communique, 17 July 1973; pp.246-248.

90. The Japanese participants were Ohira Masayoshi, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Aichi Kiichi, Minister of Finance; Sakurauchi Yoshio, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry; Nakasone Yasuhiro, Minister of International Trade and Industry; Shintani Torasaburo, Minister of Transport; Kato Tsunetaro, Minister of Labour; Kosaka Zentaro, Director-General for Economic Planning and Tsurumi Kiyohiko, Deputy Vice-Minister for Foreign Minister for Foreign Affairs.

91. Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 17 July 1973, in DSJP, 24 July 1973; p.30.

92. Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 22 July 1973, in DSJP, 24 July 1973; p.23.

93. Ninth Meeting of the Joint Japan-US Committee on Trade and Economic Affairs, Statement on Development Aid by Secretary Rogers, in DSB, 13 August 1973; p.246.

94. Yomiuri Shimbun, 20 July 1973, in DSJP, 20 July 1973; p.32.

95. Tokyo Shimbun, 24 July 1973, in DSJP, 26 July 1973; p.16.

96. Ibid.,

97. Yomiuri Shimbun, 26 July 1973, in DSJP, 26 July 1973; p.18.

98. Tokyo Shimbun, 27 July 1973, in DSJP, 1 August 1973; p.19.

99. Ibid.,

100. Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 28 July 1973, in DSJP, 31 July 1973; p.40.

101. Ibid., 28 July 1973, in DSJP, 28-30 July 1973; p.25.

102. The New York Times, 24 July 1973.

103. Text of Joint US-Japan Communique, 1 August 1973, in DSB, 27 August 1973, p.18.

104. Kyodo, 3 August 1973, SWB/FE/4364/A3/2.

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105. Saigon Home Service, 20 May 1973, SWB/FE/4302/B/3-6.

106. Ibid.,

107. Hung, op. cit., p.168.

108. Ibid., pp.180-181.

109. Ibid., p.181.

110. Kyodo, 18 May 1973, SWB/FE/4299/i.

111. Ibid., 19 June 1973, SWB/FE/4324/i.

112. Nikkan Kogyo, 12 July 1973, in DSJP, 17 July 1973; p.17.

113. Saigon Home Service, 18 July 1973, SWB/FE/4351/A3/5.

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116. Liberation Press, 20 July 1973, SWB/FE/4352/A3/3.

117. See Interview with Graham Martin broadcast in 1977 in Michael Charlton & Anthony Moncrieff, Many Reasons Why: The American Involvement in Vietnam, (London, Scolar Press, 1978); p.229; hereafter referred to as Many Reasons Why.

118. Hanoi Home Service, 22 June 1973, SWB/FE/4333/B/1.

119. Kyodo, 22 June 1973, SWB/FE/4328/A3/5.

120. Ninth Meeting of the Joint Japan-US Committee on Trade and Economic Affairs, Opening Statement by Secretary of State William Rogers, 16 July 1973, in DSB, 13 August 1973; p.241.

121. Ibid., Text of Final Communique, 17 July 1973; p.247.

122. Text of Joint US-Japan Communique, 1 August 1973, in DSB, 27 August 1973; p.303.

123. Nikkan Kogyo, 7 August 1973, in DSJP, 9 August 1973; p.18.

124. The New York Times, 24 June 1973.

125. Ibid.,

126. Mainichi Shimbun, 14 August 1973, in DSJP, 16 August 1973; p.9.

127. Ibid.,

PART II

CHAPTER V

THE TRANSITION

MID-AUGUST - DECEMBER 1973

V : I

THE SINO-FRENCH INITIATIVE

After 15 August 1973 there was a discernable disinterest, at least publicly, on the part of policy-makers on Cambodia. The American outlook on Cambodia had been encapsulated by Kissinger's statement on 23 August suggesting that Washington was backing away from further involvement there.[1] The Cambodian negotiations, he said, 'inevitably with the end of American bombing' would depend more on the decision of the Cambodian parties than on American decisions. If Congressional intent meant anything, it was that the US 'should not play the principal role' in these activities.[2] Outgoing US Ambassador in Cambodia, Emory Swank, also said around the same time that the war was increasingly counterproductive for both sides but saw little prospect that it would end soon. US policy however was still directed towards ending the war 'as quickly as possible' by negotiated settlement.[3] But prospects remained gloomy.

China was still intent on pursuing its own diplomatic ini-

tiatives. Premier Zhou Enlai had sent a message in August 1973 to the North Vietnamese leaders saying:

'The Americans want to settle the Kampuchean question and are prepared to talk with Sihanouk or a representative of Sihanouk, at the same time wish representatives of FUNK in the country would talk with Lon Nol ... At present given the American desire to pull out of Kampuchea, if one could win over a number of people within Lon Nol's ranks, that would be advantageous.'[4]

But Peking was preoccupied during the last week of August with the 10th Congress of the CCP (24-28 August 1973) which would exercise a profound effect on the Cambodian question. It is impossible to cover in this thesis all the complexities surrounding the congress. One significant result of the congress was to substantially augment Peking's hitherto lukewarm support for the Khmer Rouge. The prominence of what was later known as the 'Gang of Four' began increasingly to provide a platform of support for radical tendencies in the maquis.[5] And the rise in influence of Hua Guofeng, then Vice-Premier and Wang Dongxing, Mao's bodyguard, was also a part of Chinese domestic politics.

After the summer of 1973 Kissinger knew that Cambodia was doomed and that 'only a miracle' could save South Vietnam.[6] He believed he had 'convincing reason' to suggest that a 'significant event' in the ascendancy of the 'Gang of Four during the summer of 1973 was the collapse of the Cambodian

negotiations. The US' congressionally imposed decision humiliated Zhou who 'never recovered' his domestic position since internal attacks on him in the interim had increased.[7] Already on 29 August, the day after the congress, Kissinger said Qiao Guanhua who received David Bruce in Peking made 'no reference' to the Premier but pointedly emphasised Sino-American 'differences' instead.[8] During September Kissinger noted 'confusing signals' in Peking's statements, the 'hitherto coherent and uniform line' was missing, pointing to an internal struggle that culminated in the 'Anti-Confucius' campaign.[9]

The North Vietnamese too appeared concerned at this stage to have a clear picture of Peking's position. Two high-level North Vietnamese delegations which had held talks in Moscow stopped over in Peking: Pham Van Dong arrived on 15 August and Le Duan (who had stayed on in Moscow after mid-July) arrived on 29 August - immediately after the CCP Congress - accompanied by Hoang Van Hoan.[10] 'Extensive but separate talks' with all parties concerned including Sihanouk and Penn Nouth were described as having taken place.

By the beginning of September it was clear to all parties - Khmer and non-Khmer - that Sihanouk and his faction constituted the only conceivable barrier against the extension of radical influence in Cambodia. Every delay in the settlement of the Cambodian débâcle might be exploited to the full by the most hardline forces by increasing their pressure on Phnom Penh. Hanoi, as we have seen, had been well aware of

this. Sihanouk however believed that the suspension of bombing might enable a reorganisation of forces inside the country. He said on 21 August that an overall offensive against Phnom Penh could be deferred until the dry season (December 1973 - May 1974) began. His own reinstatement in a coalition government was however 'deadlocked' as it was 'too late now'.[11] He warned a week later against any 'peace formula' originating outside Cambodia and quelled speculation about a meeting in Moscow being underway. Any contact with the 'so-called' Khmer Republic and the right of the Soviet Union, France or any other foreign country to meddle in Cambodian affairs was not recognised. The prince was emphatic that the stand of FUNK, GRUNK and the CPNLAF remained 'totally rigid and unchanged' until the 'complete liberation' of Cambodia.[12]

Despite Sihanouk's aversion to 'foreign meddling', it was now imperative that GRUNK secured some form of international support. He embarked on such an initiative at the 4th Non-Aligned Conference in Algiers (5-9 September) and secured the recognition of GRUNK as the 'sole, legal government' of Cambodia.[13] Privately Sihanouk sent a note on 10 September to the UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim. This was a request that GRUNK's reinstatement to its seat at the UN be placed on the agenda of the next General Assembly session. We now know that the prince also secretly attempted to get Moscow on his side. According to Manac'h, at Sihanouk's

initiative, a letter from Algiers dated 12 September 1973 was addressed to the Soviet leaders Brezhnev, Kosygin and Podgorny.[14] While its contents were not revealed, the letter was apparently a pale version of another sent three days later to President Georges Pompidou, who was then on a tour of China (11-17 September) and this was duly delivered in Shanghai. Referring to the 9 September declaration of the Non-Aligned summit, Sihanouk appealed directly to France to 'contribute directly' to end the war in Cambodia in the 'briefest delay possible' by recognising GRUNK.[15]

The Franco-Chinese 'convergence' on Cambodia had been gathering momentum in the interim. Ambassador Manac'h had written from Peking on 17 August to Jobert suggesting the Franco-Chinese plan be enlarged.[16] The Khmer Rouge might evolve to eventually replace Sihanouk's forces as the principal focus of Chinese support and it was prudent, Manac'h suggested, that the Élysée issue a public declaration of support for GRUNK during Pompidou's state visit to China.

The French themselves were anxious to continue their role in the resolution of the conflict. An attempt had been made in early September to reach Sihanouk while he was in Algiers through the French Ambassador there, Jean-Marie Soutou, to ask the prince the conditions on which he considered a settlement possible.[17] But Sihanouk could not be reached.

In Peking Manac'h continued to act as intermediary for Senator Mike Mansfield. In a letter of 6 September 1973, the

senator assured Sihanouk that the executive echelon of the US Government would be continually pressured to lend him its support.[18] He also expressed the hope that the 'traces' of the conflict would soon be erased and that the prince might return to head a new government in Phnom Penh.

The state visit of Georges Pompidou to China (11-17 Sept -ember) provided an impetus for France's recognition of GRUNK. All public pronouncements throughout the visit were calculated to emphasise Franco-Chinese friendship; privately though it was Cambodia that took centre-stage. At a banquet on 11 September in honour of Pompidou, Zhou Enlai stressed the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence; considering 'all countries' subject to aggression or threat entitled to possess their own means of defence to safeguard their independence.[19] Pompidou chose to emphasise that both countries, had worked in Asia 'each in the light of its friendships and principles' for a solution to the Vietnamese conflict and hoped for a 'correct application' of the Paris Agreement by all parties concerned. Both countries also stood for the return of Cambodia to the 'position and neutrality' held until the recent crisis.[20]

Several gestures of goodwill by France towards Cambodia had also been attempted. Inaugurating Pompidou's China's visit, the Élysée announced on 11 September that its Ambassador to Phnom Penh, Louis Dauge, would shortly be posted to Warsaw without any replacement.[21] Pompidou also referred, in a meeting on 13 September with Zhou and Manac'h, to the

fact that Nixon and Brezhnev had also been encouraged - in Reykjavik and at Rambouillet - to believe that a solution to Cambodia rested on the prince.[22]

Chinese goodwill was not lacking either. During the same meeting Zhou went to great lengths to persuade Paris to accord GRUNK recognition and to play the role of mediator in the conflict. The US particularly had to be persuaded to modify its actions in Cambodia and France should immediately forestall any Soviet initiative by establishing relations with GRUNK.[23] It was crucial there be no delay in France's moves since the Soviets might swiftly take up the challenge to fill the vacuum in Cambodia.

The Sino-French Communique of 14 September said the two sides had examined the situation in Asia 'especially in Indochina' and had expressed their hope that the Paris Agreement's protocols would be scrupulously implemented. Both countries agreed that the Cambodian question be settled by the Cambodian people themselves 'free from foreign interference'.[24] The Chinese on their part pointedly reaffirmed that GRUNK under Sihanouk's leadership was the 'sole' legal government' of Cambodia and supported his Five-Point statement. But the public declaration by France officially recognising GRUNK remained to be made. The delay, attributed on 16 September by Jobert to his having yet to receive an 'official guarantee' to this effect, did not augur well.[25]

Subsequent events also worked against any possibility of a settlement in Cambodia.

V : II

JAPAN : NORMALISATION & AFTER

'For North Vietnam, which is heading for postwar reconstruction, Japan's economic aid, which can be expected after the establishment of diplomatic relations, will be worthy of being welcomed as aid of low political colouring, different from the complex bargaining by the US, China and the Soviet Union .....'

Asahi Shimbun,

19 September 1973*

* in DSJP, 21 September 1973, p.15.

Japan was aware that a new situation was emerging in Southeast Asia in the aftermath of the bombing halt in Cambodia which made more pressing the stabilisation of Vietnam. Tokyo was unrelenting therefore in its pursuit of the Japan-North Vietnam normalisation talks in Paris. According to Tokuhisa Shigeru, the Japanese Minister in France, the second session of the talks on 14 August 1973, proceeded in a 'favourable atmosphere' and discussion had centred on 'substantial problems'. The aim was to establish diplomatic relations 'without any preconditions'. An agreement might be finalised after 'two or three more negotiations', and the prospects indicated that they might be concluded 'by the autumn'.[26]

The third session of the talks on 18 September broke new ground. In Tokyo Ohira on 19 September described the negotiations as having reached 'substantial agreement' and that the documents were scheduled for signature in Paris by Japanese Ambassador Nakayama Yoshihiro and the North Vietnamese Chargé d'Affaires, Vo Van Sun on 21 September 1973.[27] The exchange of documents would involve two items, one on the establishment of diplomatic relations and the other on the exchange of ambassadors, an announcement to which effect would be made simultaneously that day in Hanoi, Tokyo and Paris.

North Vietnam had given way on its three conditions: the question of war reparations, the status of the PRG and the transportation of US weapons from Japan to Vietnam. Ohira referred to the fact that there had been 'no proposition' from Hanoi on reparations during the course of negotiations. It was widely believed that the reparations problem might be disposed of through a 'political settlement' since Japan would now have relations with both North and South Vietnam.[29] Tokyo was considering solution of the problem by the implementation of reimbursable and non-reimbursable economic cooperation covering the whole of Vietnam. Ohira took the opportunity to reaffirm in the same breath that Tokyo had 'no intention' of recognising the PRG. According to Miyake Wasuke, Hanoi had not referred to this problem throughout the course of the Paris negotiations.[30]

The normalisation of Japan-North Vietnam relations set a new precedent. Negotiations in the 'true meaning of the word' would begin only after the formal establishment of relations. The logic was that the settlement of 'outstanding' problems' might henceforth be resolved through diplomatic channels.[31] The establishment of relations was in itself significant. Japan was not required to cease recognition of South Vietnam as the legal representative of Vietnam as a whole. The PRG was acknowledged as 'existing in some form or other' and might pose the 'biggest obstacle' only after the formalities ended.

Following the establishment of relations Tokyo would further extend Hanoi some US$20 million in economic assistance as a kind of war reparations 'substitute' equal to Japan's current fiscal 1973 grant-type economic aid given to Saigon.[32] The Japanese Government had given the RVN US$39 million in war reparations, for five years beginning in 1960 to cover the whole of Vietnam and had extended in addition yen trade credits valued at US$7.5 million. As mentioned earlier, the 'Mongolian formula' utilised in February 1972 whereby Tokyo recognised Ulan Bator and extended non-repayable economic assistance instead of reparations, was being considered as a model for Hanoi.

These principles were accompanied at the same time by another departure from normal practice. Tokyo made a commitment to approve the use of Export-Import Bank funds for Nor-

th Vietnam to expand trade between the two countries.[33] The arrangement presupposed use of funds at a low interest rate which might be required when actual exports began. Trade was also to expand and Hanoi could opt for deferred payment or payment by installments. Loans were available from private Japanese banks or from Export-Import Bank funds. MITI also endorsed Tokyo-Hanoi relations on 21 September as beneficial and contributing to the development of Japan's relations with Indochina as well as Asia as a whole. The Japan-Vietnam Trading Association said trade between the two countries was about to enter a 'new phase' beginning with the visit of a government survey mission to the DRV to examine policies including that of non-reimbursable aid.[34]

The most significant development of Japanese-North Vietnamese relations following the establishment of diplomatic relations on 21 September 1973 was oil development on the Tonkin Gulf. It was disclosed on 22 September that Hanoi had been requesting technical expertise from the Japan-Vietnam Trading Association for the construction of heavy and light industry including petrochemical plants.[35] Extolling its own 'abundant mineral resources' presumed to exist inland and in the Tonkin Gulf, Hanoi had also proposed talks for a formula for 'consigned processing'. Its 'flexible posture' extended to the possibility of a joint management formula and loans on deferred payment terms. Industrial circles in Japan also approved Japanese imports for development purposes.

In an unprecedented statement, Nissho-Iwai and its trading partner Toyo Oil Development disclosed on 28 September that they had in fact reached agreement in principle on the development of offshore oil with the DRV Government 'even before' the formal establishment of relations.[36] Contact had been established with Hanoi on 6 September through a 'dummy' trading firm, Nikkyo Boeki, exclusively engaged in Japan-North Vietnam trade. It was revealed that the Tokyo visit in July of Nguyen Chanh of the DRV General Chemicals Bureau had focused on the 'bright prospects of oil' in the gulf. Hanoi had also expressed interest - prior to the establishment of relations - in the 'production sharing formula' considered an exceptional development since the two countries embraced different ideological systems. The concept necessitated a second survey mission to the DRV and a contract might be signed within a year.

On 11 October another Japanese concern, C.Itoh revealed that it would dispatch its own survey mission to Hanoi on 17 October to hold talks amongst others, with the State Planning Committee and the DRV Chamber of Commerce. A wide range of problems including the international oil situation, general oil development, concrete prospecting and the construction of oil refineries would be discussed. 'Oil-connected persons' from Hanoi might also be sent to Japan for a exchange of views.[37]

C.Itoh disclosed that it had conducted negotiations with Hanoi since June 1973: a tentative draft plan had been submitted with estimates of costs ranging from concrete pro-

cessing to production as well as the projected development of seabed oil-fields in the gulf. One proposal had enormous potential. The Tonkin Gulf development might make it possible to 'ascertain the structure and scale' of the continental shelf oilfields geophysically adjacent to the Chinese land mass in the South and East China seas. The prospect of the Tonkin Gulf oilfield evolving into a 'national project' was contemplated since Japan's national concern, the Petroleum Development Corporation (PDC) was taking it seriously. The prospect of joint oil development with the Italian state oil concern, ENI, on this project was also envisaged.

The speed with which Japan established a diplomatic sett -lement with North Vietnam and the subsequent oil equation might be attributed to Ohira's desire to pursue developments with Kissinger in New York on 24 September. Although not reported, these deliberations were believed to affirm US-Japan relations as the 'pivot' of Asia and the Pacific and covered China and Indochina.[38] The possibility - already raised in late April - of Richard Nixon becoming the first US President to visit Japan was apparently also discussed.[39] One indication of the degree of coordination reached between the US and Japan was implicit in Kissinger's proposed stopovers in Tokyo en route to and from Peking (23-26 October) later on for consultations.

Kissinger's inaugural speech on 24 September 1973 as Secretary of State before the 28th session of the UN General

Assembly gave great prominence to Japan. He made a renewed request that Japan be made a permanent member of the Security Council.[40] Pointing to 'recent reductions' in tension, he said Indochina illustrated where 'differences remained': the 'uncertain peace' there had to be strengthened. The US, he said would strive for a peace whose stability rests 'not merely on a balance of forces' but on 'shared aspirations'.

Underpinning the ideas expressed in Kissinger's speech was an American commitment to a sound programme of bilateral and multilateral foreign aid, designed to also include Japan and South Vietnam. On 10 September Nixon described his 'prime concern' about a 'central element' in America's ability to work with its allies - for our purposes, Japan and South Vietnam - to maintain peace and stability.[41] On 14 September the world's major trading nations had launched in Tokyo new multilateral trade negotiations which could lead to a significant reduction in world trade barriers.[42] In a later reference to this, Nixon on 31 October 1973 pointed to 'strong efforts' that must be made internationally to support economic development, particularly in providing reasonable amounts of new funds for international lending institutions.[42]

These statements might be~~en~~ seen against a proposal by 25 donor countries to authorise US$4.5 billion of new resources to AID at the Nairobi meeting of the World Bank (24-28 September). If approved, the US share in the replenishment

would drop accordingly from 40% to 33%. Of immediate concern to the Bank and its lending programme was the imminent exhaustion by mid-1974 of the funds for its soft-loan subsidiary, AID. Pressure from Congress had seen the US reducing its share of contributions. The annual aid programme of the Bank, its President Robert McNamara said, would surpass that of the US. Sharply critical of the 'rich countries', he only mentioned the US by name for deficiencies in their total aid for the less developed world.[43] It was now imperative for the donor countries including Japan to develop an 'emergency plan' to bridge the gap since the US could not legally provide the funds in advance of Congressional approval.

Japan's own proposals for Indochina reconstruction in the form of a 'loose consortium arrangement' had been taking shape since mid-August 1973. According to Miyake, now transferred to Geneva as First Secretary of the Mission for International Organisations, he had himself periodically referred from September 1973 to Paris.[44] On 4 October Japan's perception of the economic development of Indochina within the framework of the Paris Agreement took the following form. 'Mutual cooperation' among the various Indochinese countries was envisaged within an 'overall development plan' for the peninsula to include, according to the Japan Economic Research and Consultative Council:

One, Aid to Indochina on the basis of a combination of the bilateral and multilateral formulas with China and the

Soviet Union as donors; Two, an Indochina reconstruction fund established by the Tokyo government; Three, a reconstruction conference hosted by Tokyo with two sessions: one of 'private circles' within Indochina including Thailand and the other, with the US, China and the Soviet Union; Four, Japan would establish a 'cooperation structure' with the Indo-chinese countries concerned to avoid accusations of 'economic aggression' to promote private investment and trade; Five, both the Japanese government and private enterprises were to consolidate a formula to allow the dispatch of staff to the region to develop longterm aid plans; Six, Japan would promote foreign capital induction policies and approve investment legislation to facilitate economic development cooperation there; Seven, Japan would improve its trade balance with the Indochinese countries in view of the existing big deficit arising from the purchase, promotion and development of imports and exports.[45]

Two governmental missions would accordingly be dispatched to South Vietnam and ASEAN: one to examine the prospects for Tanaka's scheduled visit there in early 1974 (4-13 October) and another to inspect refugee relief facilities in South Vietnam and Laos (30 September-8 October).[46]

An informal conference in Paris on 16 October 1973 of Indochina aid donor nations followed. Attended by some 13 nations including Japan, with representatives from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

and the UN, it ended - against Tokyo's expectations - without significant achievement.[47] Japan had proposed the extension of aid to North Vietnam as well as multilateral aid through an aid consultative group under the IBRD. Tokyo feared that such a group might have shifted in favour of an organ for the express purpose of extending aid to South Vietnam. Japan also intended to coordinate views on Indochina reconstruction aid and to organise an aid consultative or international creditors' consortium. Given the 'prevailing situation' in Indochina, the idea of the consortium was judged 'premature' but the participants were agreeable to convening a future conference.[48]

The form of aid continued to be debated in Paris. Encouraged by Thieu's 20 May economic plan and by the Motono Moriyuki mission, Tokyo had been keen to push budgetary appropriations for aid to the South at the next Diet session. The US and Japan favoured a multilateral formula under which international lending institutions would include the World Bank, the ADB and ECAFE (Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East). The other participants wanted China and the Soviet Union included and preferred to focus only on South Vietnam as an aid recipient.

To avoid giving aid to 'one side alone' Tokyo stressed that aid to Indochina should be implemented under the auspices of the Paris Agreement.[49] After a 'transitional period' when Vietnamese reunification was achieved, aid might be

administered to Vietnam as a recipient within the context of Indochina as a whole. Immediate relief and humanitarian aid was to be dispatched to the South pending the next aid donor meeting scheduled for the spring of 1974 (See Appendix III). Aid to North Vietnam was unresolved; a mission might be sent there after a 'receiving structure' had been set up.

The difficulty with creating a viable aid-giving formula whether to North or South Vietnam was exacerbated by negative reactions elsewhere. In Hanoi the Japanese option generated considerable debate: Nhan Dan on 23 September 1973 criticised the Tanaka government for being 'inconsistent' in considering the Saigon administration the 'sole legitimate administration' of South Vietnam.[50] It accused Tokyo of failing to recognise that the Paris Agreement's protocols saw South Vietnam consisting of 'two administrations and two areas of control'. Hanoi's warning was accompanied by what appeared to be the emergence of a hard line concerning the war in the South which could only dissipate any goodwill on the part of any aid donor.

V : III

THE SCENARIO CHANGES

By the third week of September 1973, Hanoi seemed to have embarked on two potentially incompatible strategies.

One strategy, as we have seen, was exemplified by the DRV's opening of diplomatic relations with Japan in relation to economic and reconstruction aid which implied overall restraint towards the rest of Indochina. An alternative strategy, by contrast, emphasised Soviet aid, renewal of war, reunification of Vietnam and ultimate alignment with the Soviet bloc. Attention was correspondingly being given to tighter control of resources, especially oil, which would have an effect on the DRV's naval strategy. The intensification of the war in the South was possibly part of the latter strategy of renewing the war while emphasising the Soviet connection.

Le Duan's return to Hanoi from Moscow at the end of August witnessed increased contacts with the Soviet bloc:visits by the Vladivostok Party, then the CPSU Kommunist (1-8 September) and Bulgarian Agitprop delegations took place alongside a vitriolic propaganda war unleashed by Moscow against Peking. Peking was accused of 'deviating' from Marxist-Leninist theory and practice and of attempting to dominate Southeast Asia by setting up 'political and military arrangements'.

The anti-Chinese propaganda of the Soviets, according to Enver Hoxha, Leader of the Albanian Communist Party, was already evident at the Non-Aligned conference in Algiers (5-9 September) where Moscow was preparing to operate through Fidel Castro, Premier of the Cuban Revolutionary Government who attacked both China and Albania.[51] An anti-Chinese offen-sive was visible during the Hanoi visit (12-17 September) of

Fidel Castro, when a 'complete identity of views' on all questions was reached. In his first official visit to Hanoi, Castro reaffirmed Cuba's 'continued and wholehearted support' for Vietnam in national reconstruction as well as in the struggle to make the 'other side' implement the Paris Agreement 'scrupulously'.[52] Castro's visit to the 'liberated zone' of South Vietnam was a 'political event' attesting to the 'unshakeable militant solidarity' between the South Vietnamese and Cuban peoples. Both the Cubans and the North Vietnamese emphasised the 'restoration of unity' among socialist countries within the international communist movement and the Joint Communique of 18 September 1973 pledged to make 'increasing contributions' to its cause.[53]

Castro's visit to Hanoi and the emphasis on tightening relations with the Soviet bloc take on increased significance when seen against developments in B-2 where the war was being renewed. After Le Duan's return from Moscow a conference of military cadres from all over B-2 met in September 1973 to 'disseminate resolution 21 and organise its implementation'.[54] The gravity of the conference, according to Tran Van Tra, was demonstrated by an important assessment of the enemy's strength 'relative to B-2's' and what later emerged as COSVN Resolution 12 became the basis upon which Tra approved B-2's operational plan for the 1973-74 dry season. In this connection we know that COSVN held its 12th conference in September 1973 following the meeting in July

and August of the Standing Committee of the Interzone Party and the Military Region 5 Party Committee which agreed to promptly bring about a 'strong transformation' of the situation.[55]

One manifestation of this strategy was apparent in Saigon's charge on 20 September that Hanoi was making 'intensive war-like preparations' to reopen hostilities in the South.[56] A note was simultaneously sent to the participants of the Paris conference appealing to them to stop Hanoi's actions. For the first time after the ceasefire the communists on 22 September opened artillery fire on Le Minh base 37 km south of Pleiku. An assault on the base by some 3000 troops followed on 22-23 September. As Le Minh guarded an infiltration corridor from Cambodia, the move appeared designed to facilitate the flow of arms and troops into South Vietnam's Pleiku and Kontum provinces. Saigon construed the seizure of Le Minh as a 'premeditated act' aimed at renewing the war: the troops belonged to the PAVN's 320th division which was familiar with the terrain having previousiously conducted campaigns there.[57]

While we cannot know why the PAVN chose this moment to strike, 23 September was marked in Hanoi as the 28th anniversary of South Vietnam's resistance war against French colonialism. On the occasion Quan Doi Nhan Dan urged the 'intensification of the struggle in the new phase' and called on the North to 'coordinate' its efforts with the South in completing the revolution.[58] The situation there, Nhan Dan added, had undergone 'basic changes' since 'we are mightier than the counterrevolutionary forces'.[59]

Condemned as a 'deliberate act' on 1 October by Nguyen Van Thieu speaking in Pleiku, the Le Minh attack testified to a general offensive to be launched by Hanoi in the 'next two to three months' and was closely related to a major recruiting drive in the 'new stage' of the revolution.[60] Cao Van Vien saw Le Minh as the beginning of an extensive communist campaign - embarked upon in late 1973 and to continue unabated into 1974 - against the RVN's remote outposts and bases.[61] Vien criticised Thieu's instructions forbidding evacuation of the bases as tantamount to sacrificing a substantial number of troops which could have been successfully deployed elsewhere.

Saigon also saw Le Minh as a pretext by the Viet Cong to renew the war and compel the South to supply its troops since Hanoi, already suffering food shortages, could not possibly supply 300,000 troops.[62] The assault was also set in the context of many serious violations by Hanoi of the Paris Agreement, including the entry of the Chinese ship, 'Hongqi' into Cua Viet port with 'illegal reinforcements' and the transformation of twelve airfields under temporary communist control into air bases.[63]

But Le Minh had greater ramifications for Indochina as a whole. By now any military distraction in Vietnam was viewed with equal suspicion in Cambodia since the bombing halt made the threat of any offensive, however small, very real.

Le Minh thus gave Cambodia cause for concern. Renewing its 6-point peace proposal of 6 July, Phnom Penh appealed to the US on 24 September 1973 to increase its military aid to Cambodia by US$1 million a day, the amount Washington used to spend on bombing.[64] By leaving the Khmer Republic to fight the enemy alone, the US, Phnom Penh claimed, 'gained' about US$30 million a month after 15 August. Lon Nol's speech on 25 September in honour of General John Vogt declared Cambodia was facing 'intensified aggression' from the Vietnamese.[65]

The US Embassy's response on 24 September said that it did not 'as a matter of policy' discuss individual requests. The two governments were in 'constant dialogue' on military and economic assistance so that programmes would be responsive to 'changing needs and situations'.[66]

Additional arms aid could be found either by juggling funds in the US military aid programme or through a Presidential request to Congress for a supplemental appropriation. The Administration as we have seen, had asked for US$167 million in military aid for Cambodia in fiscal 74 beginning on July 1. This figure, proposed in the autumn of 1972 was considered 'unrealistic' by the Embassy. The statement was significant since it was made at a time when a decision on the amount of Cambodia aid for fiscal 74 was awaiting a meeting of a House-Senate conference committee tentatively acheduled for mid-October.[67]

In New York for the UN General Assembly, Secretary Kiss-

inger on 4 October assured Cambodian Foreign Minister Long Boret of continued American support, reiterating that he had no plans to meet Sihanouk.[68] The possibility of discussions with Chinese leaders to bring the Cambodian problem to an end was not apparently ruled out. On 3 October Nixon officially announced that Kissinger would be making another visit to Peking from 26-29 October with stops in Tokyo both ways.[69] There would be a chance for Kissinger to discuss international issues with Zhou Enlai, the first opportunity to do so after the 10th CCP Congress. In Washington it was hoped that Zhou's policy of improvement of relations with the US might have survived any domestic challenges that could have been raised against it.

At this point Kissinger detected a 'basic (Chinese) indifference' on Cambodia. In conversation with Kissinger on 3 October, Qiao Guanhua in New York said: 'whether Cambodia turns red, pink, black, white or what, what difference will this make in the end for world history? The best way out is for neither of us to get involved in Cambodia.'[70] Qiao did not stress Chinese interests as being different but emphasis-ed pointedly that 'our circumstances are not the same'. Considering the overall situation, the Cambodian issue was 'very definitely a side issue', Qiao added. These remarks led Kissinger to believe that Peking had no preference about the outcome in Indochina.

The changed circumstances concerning Cambodia appeared to be reverberating in several capitals at around the same

time. In Peking Ambassador Manac'h, who was preparing to leave his posting on 2 October, received an urgent message from Sihanouk on 27 September requesting France to make a 'little compensation' by recognising GRUNK.[71] The prince followed this up by a note on 28 September to Secretary General Waldheim to consider UN recognition of GRUNK; Manac'h on the same day asked Jobert to establish relations with GRUNK.

Moscow too appeared aware of the changed circumstances. In a remarkable development, the Soviet Union on 9 October informed Sihanouk through its Ambassador in Peking Vassili Tolstikov that Moscow would 'cooperate' with GRUNK in future and give it 'all necessary support'.[72] The note pointedly referred to Sihanouk as 'Head of State' and called his government the 'sole, legal representative of Cambodia'. The Soviet note of 9 October however fell short of giving the prince's government diplomatic recognition and of breaking relations with Lon Nol. The Soviet initiative was itself significant: representing an important opportunity for Moscow to make up for lost ground in its attempts to upstage Chinese moves in Cambodia and elsewhere in Southeast Asia. More immediately, Soviet support now might have a positive effect on the imminent debate in the UN on whether GRUNK might be reinstalled.

One other consideration merits attention. The Soviet initiative was made during Japanese Premier Tanaka's Moscow visit (7-10 October). In his speech of welcome Brezhnev en-

couraged Tanaka to cooperate with the Soviet Union in the solution of 'many an international problem' in the interests of consolidating peace and security in Asia and throughout the world.[73] This was possibly an inducement to Japan to support a Soviet-proposed Asian Collective Security System as well as an open bid to wean Japan from close cooperation with China. On Tokyo's part its proposals in early October concerning Indochina - made immediately prior to Tanaka's Moscow visit - suggest that Japan was looking for simultaneous improvement of relations with Moscow to improve relations with Hanoi in that context.

Events elsewhere had by then taken a drastic turn which would have repercussions on Cambodia. The Middle East War of 6 October 1973 had broken out. Kissinger refers to the interval of 9-10 October as the the 'tide turns ominously' and that of 15-16 October as the 'tide turns again'.[74] By 24 October there was a nuclear alert with several days of acute crisis.[75] While we cannot know how this affects the scenario the overall situation changes henceforth in a very disruptive way. On 24 October Kissinger postponed his visit to China to 10-13 November 1973.[76]

In Thailand the unfolding at the same time of the crisis on 6 October which led to the overthrow of Thanom Kittikachorn was another factor making for disruption in Indochina.[77] Sihanouk made a personal appeal to Mike Mansfield; in a telegramme of 14 October he called on Nixon to terminate the

war in Cambodia: FUNK and GRUNK would immediately establish diplomatic relations with the US and guarantee freedom of departure for Lon Nol; a general amnesty would be granted to those who cooperated with the US and remaining himself only as 'titular head' of Cambodia, Sihanouk would no longer exercise any political power. His proposed government would include Penn Nouth as Premier, Khieu Samphan as Deputy Premier and Defence Minister and Hu Nim as Information Minister.[78]

A gesture of goodwill was also made by the US: on 15 October Huang Zhen brought Kissinger a message from Zhou Enlai that Sihanouk's mother was ill in Phnom Penh and arrangements were made the next day for the Queen to be flown to China.[79] This notwithstanding, Sihanouk stressed again on 17 October that he would not meet Kissinger who was scheduled to visit China on 23-26 October.[80]

But the latter preferred to deal with the Chinese anyway. Prior to his trip to Moscow, Kissinger on 19 October met Huang Zhen in Washington, an event he 'put to good use'.[81] While Kissinger was in Moscow (20-22 October), the Soviet Union was reported on 21 October to be reducing the staff at its Phnom Penh embassy to three low level aides with the rest scheduled to leave on 24 October.[82] This looked like a furtherance of Soviet initiatives of 9 October.

The effort to restore the 'lawful rights' of GRUNK in the

UN gathered momentum nevertheless. On 11 October a joint letter by some 31 countries including Albania, Algeria, China, Romania and Yugoslavia requested the restoration of the Cambodian seat to GRUNK be put on the next agenda of the General Assembly.[83] On 16 October Chinese Ambassador Huang Hua emphasised that the Lon Nol government's 'unlawful usurpation' of Cambodia's seat in the UN was a 'complete violation' of the UN Charter.[84] The General Assembly however decided on 17 October (by a vote of 69:24 with 29 abstensions) to discuss GRUNK's restoration to the UN[85] and on 20 October Sihanouk announced the intention to reorganise his government-in-exile so that all cabinet members except those in the Foreign Ministry would come from the resistance.[86]

But developments in and concerning Cambodia appeared increasingly to be determined by events in Vietnam where the perception of war in the last quarter of 1973 had undergone considerable change.

To Hanoi, October 1973, according to Van Tien Dung, Chief of Staff of the PAVN, marked a 'critical turning point' The 21st plenum of the Party Central Committee met then and called for the 'coordination of the political and military struggle with diplomacy'.[87] The road for the South would be that of 'revolutionary violence' in which event the return of largescale war would see 'complete victory' being sought.

If the 'enemy' continued not to implement the Paris Agreement and pursued the policy of Vietnamisation, there was 'no other course' but to conduct revolutionary warfare, destroy the enemy and 'liberate the South'.

The Anti-US Resistance War describes the event as 'one of the Party's historically significant plenums' which was 'meticulously prepared' by the politburo in October 1973.[88] A major decision was made to complete the revolution in the South after a 'strong transformation' of the situation there was brought about: from the victories of the latter part of 1973 and in 1974 to the general offensive and uprising of the spring of 1975. The meeting 'unanimously agreed' with the June 1973 resolution (See p. 193). Moreover, the revolution in the neighbouring countries, Laos and Cambodia, was 'actively helped' by the resolution to 'continue to win victories'. The formation of the strategic corps 'quan doan' was inaugurated on 24 October 1973 as it was now necessary to reorganise one large campaign after another.[89]

As a corollary to the hardening of the line on the South, attention was also being given in the DRV to naval defence and the protection of Hanoi's increasingly vital oil interests. During the period when the Japanese oil option was being explored, Le Duan and Van Tien Dung paid a visit on 18 October to the DRV's naval units. Emphasising the 'extremely important role' of the naval forces in meeting the 'immediate and longterm demands' of national defence and reconstruct-

ion, Le Duan said it was necessary to achieve 'close combat coordination' with other armed services. The naval forces were to make a 'worthy contribution' to the development of maritime navigation and the exploration of the 'abundant and endless resources of our seas'.[90] It was revealed on 23 October that a naval emulation campaign ranging from coastguard battalions to radar stations and shipyards had been launched.[91] The need for discipline in the armed forces, Quan Giai Phong stressed on 22 October, 'must be stronger than before' to meet 'all requirements' in the future to 'ensure victory'. A visit to the army revealed on 30 October by Le Duan accompanied by Van Tien Dung and Song Hao, Deputy-Secretary of the Central Military Party Committee and Head of the PAVN General Political Department followed. Army cadres were urged to develop a 'powerful people's army' to 'crush all acts of war'.[93]

By the third week of October North Vietnam, according to US intelligence, had moved since the ceasefire more than 70,000 fighting men, 400 tanks and more than 200 artillery pieces into South Vietnam. The PAVN moved 15 anti-aircraft artillery regiments to the South having nearly completed a new all-weather highway south to Tay Ninh while rebuilding 12 airfields along the hilly perimeter west of the country.[94] These improvements gave North Vietnam the 'greatest attack potential' since the March 1972 offensive. The difference now was that the DRV did not necessarily face heavy opposition from US airpower.

Parallel with these developments, the DRV's ties with the Soviet bloc were strengthened. Pham Van Dong with Nguyen Duy Trinh embarked in the meantime on visits to East Germany, Czechosolvakia and Albania (16 October-6 November) in a delegation that included state planning and defence specialists. The presence of Tran Sam, Vice-Minister of National Defence suggested that the visits might have had a military element.[95] In East Berlin Dong secured the provision of military assist ance together with economic aid arrangements. Prague took the lead among the central European countries in its cancellation of debts owed by Hanoi for aid given during the war. In Tirana a joint statement was signed marking a 'new contribution' to the strengthening of 'fraternal friendship' with two agreements on economic assistance and on trade and payments.[96]

Returning to Moscow on 2-3 November, Pham Van Dong, in an exchange of views with Kosygin, discussed measures to ensure the strict implementation of the Paris Agreement and international issues of 'mutual interest'.[97] The Soviet side remained committed to give 'effective assistance' and support to the DRV in its efforts for the 'socialist reconstruction' of its economy and for the widening of Soviet-Vietnamese cooperation. There was much press speculation at the time about a possible visit by Brezhnev to Hanoi.[98]

By the first fortnight of November however a different scenario in Indochina with several strands of action had emerged.

V : IV

CAMBODIA : 'SIDE-ISSUE'

Cambodia by contrast bore the brunt of these onslaughts. Kissinger, as we have seen, was obliged on 24 October to delay his China visit to 10-13 November. This interval was exploited to the full by the insurgents. On 28 October Khieu Samphan appealed to compatriots, cadres and combattants of the CPNLAF for a 'more powerful offensive' in the 1973-74 dry season.[99] Attacks on all domains surrounding Phnom Penh, in the few provincial capitals and on communication lines 'under temporary enemy control' were thus intensified resulting in the fall on 4 and 7 November of two strategic towns, Tram Khnar and Srang. In a move that appeared designed to forestall Kissinger's Peking visit, a communique was issued in Peking on 9 November to transfer GRUNK's ministries still abroad to Cambodian soil where they would exercise 'full authority'. Invoking the 23 March 1970 statement which had been reaffirmed by the National Congress of 21 July 1973, the communique warned that the struggle of the Cambodian people had reached its 'ultimate phase' and would lead to 'ultimate victory'.[100]

The foundation simultaneously in Tokyo on 9 November of a Japan-Cambodia Association suggested an initiative to expand GRUNK's recognition.[101] Chairman Sasaki Kozo and

Director-General Sakamoto Tokumatsu of the Association were assisted by 'advisors' including Saionji Kinkazu, Kuroda Hisao and Fujiyama Aiichiro, eminent friends of Peking. Although not a Japanese government move, the presence of Chen Zhu, Ambassador to Japan implied Chinese support for the creation of a pro-GRUNK lobby in Japan.

Peking moreover hosted a banquet on 8 November for Ieng Sary, Special Envoy from the Interior before he left for the 'liberated zone'.[102] A preliminary visit by Ieng Sary to Hanoi (9-13 November) reflected a strong military element. The delegation included Duong Sam Ol, Minister of Military Equipment and Armaments and Thioun Prasith, Minister in Charge of 'Coordination of Efforts and Struggle for the National Liberation of Cambodia'.[103] No communique however was issued after talks with Pham Van Dong and Nguyen Co Thach, in stark contrast to Dong's own talks in Moscow barely a week earlier.

Meanwhile in a visit to the 'liberated zone' of Sam Neua in Laos, revealed only after his return on 7 November, Le Duan underlined the 'utmost importance' Hanoi attached to the promotion of security, suggesting the need for a friendly presence beyond Vietnam's western frontier.[104] This could be linked to the imminent installation of GRUNK on Cambodian soil which may have propelled the Vietnamese decision to form a security corridor with Laos. Le Duan was determined on the basis of 'equality and mutual interests' not to allow 'any other country'

to use 'either country' as a springboard for intervention and aggression against the other. The intention too was probably to isolate Cambodia from the rest of Indochina and to establish Hanoi's defence interests as compatible with Laos'.

With Soviet backing and the allegiance of the Pathet Lao secured, by early November 1973 military activity both in the North and the South took on a new emphasis and scale. An offensive had already begun in B-2, the 'all-encompassing battlefield' with the largest enemy forces and many important strategic and campaign objectives, which affected the general situation. Tran Van Tra began the 1973-74 dry season offensive by ensuring that the transportation corridor was 'unimpeded and safe'.[105] The 'most savage battle' since the ceasefire followed. Bu Bong and Bu Prang, outposts near the Cambodian border were taken on 4 November. Two days later Dak Song fell. On 7 November the Viet Cong attacked Bien Hoa base, the largest air base in the country and the location of one of the ICCS units. As retaliation the RVN military command bombed two areas near the Cambodian border Loc Ninh and Bo Duc, in the 'largest air strike' since the ceasefire. The battle for control of South Vietnam's border with Cambodia in the Central Highlands intensified to such an extent by mid-Novem -ber that a South Vietnamese divisional commander remarked on 21 November that Thieu's forces would require American arms, fuel and both tactical and strategic air support if the communists staged a major offensive in the next few months.[106]

In the interim Kissinger's visit to Peking (10-13 November) affirmed the 'basic indifference' over Cambodia which could not be discussed 'except within the context of all Indochina'.[107] An entire session was devoted to it 'later on' during the visit. This was not elaborated upon, but Zhou Enlai we are told 'did not return to the subject' except to tell Kissinger that his conversations with North Vietnamese leaders indicated that they had 'no intention' of launching a major offensive now.

Six years later Hanoi's interpretation of Kissinger's Peking visit described the two sides as having issued a statement which said:

'In the particularly serious situation at present, it is necessary for China and the US to hold frequent contacts at competent level to exchange views on matters of mutual interest. In fact, these were common efforts made by the Chinese rulers and the US in order to hinder the struggle of the armed forces in South Vietnam. The Peking rulers even advised the US 'not to allow yourselves to be defeated in Vietnam and not to pull your forces from Southeast Asia'.'[108]

The Joint Communique of 14 November 1973 did provide 'frequent contact' between the US and China at authoritative levels in both Washington and Peking and the widening in scope of the Liaison Offices in each others' capitals to include consular, trade and information services.[109] It also noted that

international relations were in a period of 'intense change' and reaffirmed that 'disputes between states' should be settled without resorting to force or threat of force. The Soviet threat was dispelled by the phrase that 'neither side should seek hegemony in Asia or the Pacific or elsewhere and that both sides opposed attempts by anyone else to establish such hegemony'.

Cambodia was not directly referred to in the communique and Kissinger's discussions with Zhou appeared to confirm Sihanouk's worst fears that Cambodia was placed on the back-burner. One particular phrase stressed in the communique was that 'in order to exchange views and while not negotiating on behalf of 'third parties', it was important to engage in 'concrete consultations on issues of mutual concern'.[110] Kissinger described the US position as not being opposed to the prince: 'If he could return to Cambodia in a position of real independence for himself, we would be very interested in him as a leader. We are not interested in him if he is a captive of one particular faction that is simply using him for a very brief period of time in order to gain international recognition.'[111]

After Kissinger's departure from China - the prince disclosed on 16 November that the transfer of GRUNK ministers to the interior was a tactical move designed to bolster international support for GRUNK.[112] It was also calculated to coincide with the General Assembly debate due to begin in early Decem -ber. Denying that there was a struggle for power, Sihanouk claimed that on his insistence the resistance leaders had accept-

ed the transfer on 9 November so that forces hostile to GRUNK could no longer treat it as a 'government-in -exile'. The elimination of the 'external part' of GRUNK would strongly reinforce its international and national position at a time when the UN debate on Cambodia's representation was about to take place. A telegramme on 3 December to Khieu Samphan approved the nomination of new ministers of GRUNK inside Cambodia and the composition of the FUNK Committee. The ministerial portfolios included Prince Norodom Phurissara, Minister of Justice, Thiounn Thioeunn, Minister of Public Health, Toch Phoeun, Minister of Public Works, Telecommunications and Reconstruction Chou Chet, Minister of Religious and Social Affairs and Mrs. Ieng Thirith, Minister of People's Education and Youth.[113]

On 4 December China, Algeria, Yugoslavia and some 30 other nations opened a drive at the UN General Assembly to expel the Lon Nol Government and to seat GRUNK. The Chinese remained intent - at the risk of defeat - on pressing for recognition of Sihanouk as sole legitimate representative of Cambodia. The US Representative W.Tapley Bennet, Jr., maintained on 5 December that the Cambodian resolution was'particularly notable' for its one-sidedness and failure to take account of the 'real situation' in Cambodia. Calling it 'simplistic' and 'totally unacceptable', he said it might set a precedent for other nations.[114] Opposing the campaign were the Asian neighbours of Cambodia including Japan, who along with the US attacked the move as a dangerous precedent of 'interference' in Cambodian internal

affairs. The Soviet Union and its supporters were conspicuously silent in the debate, making no effort to support the claims of Sihanouk despite its move to recognise GRUNK in early October. A move developed in the event among the non-committed countries to defer the decision until the following year which the Assembly adopted by a rollcall vote of 53:50 with 21 abstensions.[115]

Having failed to secure GRUNK's recognition at the UN, another attempt to consolidate its legitimacy surfaced in Paris where a Cambodian Solidarity Conference opened on 12 December.[116] The stated aim was to deprive Washington of further means to violate the spirit and letter of Article 20 and to isolate to the maximum, Lon Nol's influence in the international arena. Sihanouk's message to the conference invoked the said article as perpetuating the continued state of war in Cambodia, caused 'essentially' by foreign interference. Despite the prince's emphasis on previous proposals already made known, the heightening of the offensive on the ground was simultaneously being intensified.

The fall of Vihear Suor on 30 November was an inauspicious beginning of the dry season which was expected to bring a renewed push by the Khmer Rouge to strangle Phnom Penh. Vihear Suor stood astride an infiltration route leading to the eastern bank of the Mekong opposite Phnom Penh which under intense insurgency pressure had been surrounded for almost three months. Hu Nim, Minister of Propaganda and Information revealed that the CPNLAF had begun opening more important fronts beginni-

ng in December and by 23 December had gained enough strength to be able to shell various enemy positions inside the capital.[117] The December offensive was described as the 'biggest push' the insurgents had made and was the 'first real concerted attempt' to penetrate into the capital.[118] It was bigger in terms of offensives than those of the previous summer; attributed possibly to the fact that 'at the end of 1973' the Party in the maquis 'finally asserted full control' of the Front's miltary command structure, and political commissars were assigned to assist and instruct officers down to company level throughout most of the country.[119]

The deteriorating military situation notwithstanding, Tokyo in the last quarter of 1973 continued to forge closer ties in Vietnam.

V : V

TOKYO & HANOI : THE OIL CONNECTION

Like other industrial democracies affected by the Arab-Israeli War, Japan was profoundly shaken by the oil 'shokku' from mid-October 1973 onwards. On 16 October in a sudden and unprecedented move - without consultation with consumer nations - six OPEC Gulf states unilaterally raised the posted price of oil by 70%. The imminent oil crisis saw Hanoi responding to the Petroleum Development Corporation's (PDC) call to send 'oil-connected persons' to Japan. On 17 October it confirmed the visit from 26 October by Hoang Quoc Viet, Chairman of

the Fatherland Front, the first senior DRV official to go to Japan in the wake of diplomatic relations.[120] On 24 October Nissho-Iwai announced the dispatch of their second survey mission to the DRV and disclosed that Hanoi - in a radical departure from standard practice - had also accepted oil development with Japan on the basis of a joint venture.[121] This was a welcome development from the 'production sharing formula' indicated earlier which marked a contradiction in terms of state ownership.

Also President of the Vietnam General Federation of Trade Unions, Hoang Quoc Viet's visit to Japan (30 October-10 November) came at a critical juncture when Japan was reeling from the oil shock. It preceded Kissinger's visit to Tokyo by 4 days. Viet was in Japan, not as a guest of the government, but at the invitation of six organisations including the JSP, JCP, SOHYO (Japanese Federation of Trade Unions). As leader of the first North Vietnamese political delegation to Japan, Viet used the occasion to encourage 'greater contact' between Tokyo and Hanoi. The establishment of diplomatic ties was only a 'nominal beginning'; he reminded his hosts throughout his visit that the DRV hoped for a reasonable settlement of 'some problems' including Japanese recognition of the PRG and the question of reparations.[122] Bilateral aid was to be based on the principles of equality and reciprocity.

Viet gave particular emphasis to the fact that Japan might turn to North Vietnam to secure oil reserves 'much nearer home'. Embroiled in war the DRV's resources had remained

untapped and Japan could offer oil technology and development in return.[123] Hanoi saw Japanese economic cooperation as 'unconditional'. North Vietnam's basic goal was to lay its economic foundations by 1975 to begin a new plan for 1976-78 which necessitated foreign aid.

Several important developments coincided with Viet's Tokyo visit. On 6 November it was disclosed that agreed memoranda had been exchanged between Hanoi and two Japanese oil companies. Oil development of the Tonkin Gulf might begin with the decision by the Daiichi Hypothec Bank, including the Kawasaki, Furukawa and C.Itoh groups with ENI, the Italian State oil enterprise, to respond to such a request from Hanoi.[124]

Oil development might also consequently become crucial both for the industrial reconstruction of Vietnam and for the diversification of Japan's oil supplies. Japanese cooperation with ENI was based on the latter's 'close connection' with China and North Vietnam. The possibility of a new phase of joint oil development between Tokyo, Peking and Hanoi on contiguous areas of the continental shelf was envisaged.

At the same time Toyo Oil was ready on 7 November to embark on exploration of oil fields in the Tonkin Gulf. Described as its 'first independent project' the intention was to settle negotiations with Hanoi formally within the year.[125] Toyo Oil's biggest shareholder, Nissho-Iwai, as we have seen had participated in talks with Hanoi since 1972 and had

'especially good connections' with North Vietnam. Deposits in the gulf adjacent to the East China Sea were estimated to be 'greater than those of the North Sea': Toyo Oil and Nissho-Iwai were scheduled shortly to sound out China's intentions since the area to be developed was adjacent to Hainan Island and stood at the entrance to the Tonkin Gulf.[126] The disclosure by Fuyo Oil on 9 November that it had also been negotiating with the Compagnie Française des Petroles to explore South China Sea development was another positive development.[127]

Hoang Quoc Viet's Tokyo visit culminated in an unprecedented meeting with Ohira on 9 November when the latter affirmed Japan's commitment to contribute to Vietnamese reconstruction.[128] Despite the destabilising forces mentioned earlier there was no change in Japanese strategy on Vietnam.

After Peking Kissinger visited Tokyo (14-16 November) where he found the oil crisis shaking Japan 'to its core'. By November 1973 Tokyo's leaders were beginning to feel that their national interest and indeed survival, might require them to dissociate from US policy in the Middle East. The overwhelming majority of the Japanese cabinet, according to Kissinger, favoured some dissociation from Washington: Foreign Minister Ohira alone stood for solidarity with the US.[129]

Little was divulged about Kissinger's Tokyo visit but the Japanese press said it stressed the necessity of a policy change on Japan's part in both the short and longrange fields including: 1) The shelving of the 'Archipelago Remodelling Plan' outlined by Premier Tanaka, 2) The shifting of industrial policy centreing on heavy and chemical industry, 3) The diversification of channels for securing resources which focused extensively on the Middle East and the expansion of the development of Japan's own independent supply channels which were not dependent on the 'majors' (international oil capital) as a national policy.[130]

Indochina reconstruction had been discussed, according to Kissinger, at 'an initial meeting' held at the World Bank's Paris office in October 1973 to exchange views on aid when the US supported the Bank's efforts and the Japanese proposal (See Appendix III). A second mission sent to Vietnam in November 1973 by the Bank subsequently proposed a 'follow-on' meeting be held in February 1974 to discuss the formation of the Indochina consultative group. However the 'reactions of the participating countries' to the energy crisis and to the Congressional decision on the AID replenishment led the Bank to postpone the meeting until late spring.

Indochina aid was probably discussed in this context during Kissinger's Tokyo visit. On 17 November - the day after Kissinger's departure - US Ambassador to Japan, Robert Ingersoll (who was recommended by Kissinger to be nomin-

ated Deputy Secretary for East Asia and the Pacific on 12 October) was recalled by Nixon.[131] Having performed his role as Ambassador to Japan since 1972 'with great distinction', the choice of Ingersoll, Kissinger said, personified the importance the US attached 'in our Asian policy' to the special role of Japan. As we shall see, Ingersoll would subsequently play a 'very crucial role' in the formulation and conduct of US foreign policy.

By this time the US perception of events in Indochina had undergone considerable change. The American commitment to postwar reconstruction in Indochina was ultimately related to assurances that aid given would be used constructively. On 27 November 1973 however the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 was amended by the following passage:

'The President is authorised to furnish, on such terms and conditions as he may determine, assistance for relief and reconstruction of South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos including especially humanitarian assistance to refugees, civil war casualties and other persons disadvantaged by hostilities or conditions related to those hostilities in South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. No assistance shall be furnished under this section to South Vietnam unless the President receives assurances satisfactory to him that no assistance furnished under this part and no local currencies generated as a result of assistance furnished under this part, will be used for support of police, or prison construction and administration within South Vietnam.'[132]

There was another clause on the prohibition of assistance to North Vietnam, stressing that 'notwithstanding any other provision of law, no funds authorised by this Act shall be expended to aid, or assistance in the reconstruction of the DRV unless by an Act of Congress assistance to North Vietnam is specifically authorised'.[133]

Where Indochina Postwar Reconstruction was concerned, the Senate Bill amended the Foreign Assistance Act by adding a new 'part V' authorising rehabilitation and reconstruction in South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos of which not less than US$10 million was to support humanitarian programmes.

Coupled with these moves the hardening of Hanoi's position appeared at the end of November to have been enhanced. Promising Japanese-North Vietnamese relations received a sudden setback on 30 November. Kyodo reported indications from Hanoi suggesting all oil proposals had been suspended. North Vietnam could not accept the Japanese PDC's participation in oil development until 'unresolved diplomatic probbems' were settled, including the PRG's recognition and reparations.[134]

The toughening of Hanoi's stance was evident in the South as well. Saigon on 30 November spoke of the need to create an 'economic blockade' since the communists appeared ready at the end of the rainy season to create a strength greater than what they possessed prior to the summer.[135] What was described as the 'fiercest fighting since January 1973' ensued with

the Viet Cong taking the initiative in much of the escalation. The attack on Kien Duc on 4 December was the first frontal assault by the communists on a district capital and the largest battle since the ceasefire. Its seizure saw the Viet Cong poised to move towards Gia Nghia, the provincial capital of Quang Duc. On 6 December the Viet Cong threatened the Saigon Administration with 'new lessons' if its 'punitive blows' in Chu Nghe, Thanh Duc, Bien Hoa, Dong Du, Bu Bong, Tuy Duc and Nha Be would not compel the 'Thieu clique' to act properly.[136] It was alleged in Saigon on 12 December that Hanoi's General Hoang Van Thai had personally commanded the attack in Quang Duc indicating that military strategy in the South was directed by North Vietnam.[137]

Judged to have 'developed and matured' in combat and campaigns with 'good results', B-2 was conferred a 'new strategic status' in mid-December 1973.[138] The decision was also reached of a plan to gain the initiative by 'tying their hands and feet' to deflect the enemy and force it to be concerned with the defence of Saigon and thus prevent it from attacking Loc Ninh.

These disruptive influences at the end of 1973 would set the stage for a new scenario in 1974 where different forces would come into play. And where the economic framework for the stabilisation of Indochina would be tied to wider global designs and influences.

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10. NCNA, 17 August 1973, SWB/FE/4376/A3/1; NCNA, 30 August 1973, SWB/FE/4389/A3/5.

11. Asahi Shimbun, 22 August 1973, in DSJP, 24 August 1973; p.18.

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CHAPTER V : II

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32. Kyodo, 21 September 1973, SWB/FE/4406/A3/3.

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34. Asahi Shimbun, 22 September 1973, in DSJP, 2 October 1973; p.39.

35. Asahi Shimbun, 22 September 1973, in DSJP, 2 October 1973; p.39.

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38. Sankei Shimbun, 25 September 1973, in DSJP, 29 September-1 October 1973; p.22.

39. See HAK I, p.333, in which Kissinger discusses Nixon's previous visits to Japan as a private citizen and the embarassment of cancelling in 1960 then US President Eisenhower's planned visit to Japan which resulted in Premier Kishi Nobusuke's resignation.

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132. The Foreign Assistance Act of 1973, November 27 1973, House Foreign Affairs Committee Report (H383-21); 93rd Congress, 1st Session, (Washington, D.C., US Government Printing Office, 1973).

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136. Liberation Radio, 6 December 1973, SWB/FE/4471/A3/1.

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CHAPTER VI

THE LIMITS TO STABILITY

DECEMBER 1973 - AUGUST 1974

'Although the Nixon Administration's limited achievements in the diplomatic sphere and its policy of detente have brought the USA some immediate advantages, they have also created many new contradictions. At a time when the USA remains bogged down in Southeast Asia, Japan and many other powers have jumped in to compete fiercely with the USA for influence, transforming this zone into a focus of competing interests.'

NHAN DAN

1 January 1974*

'Among the major powers involved in Asia - the People's Republic of China, Japan, the Soviet Union and the United States - there is increasing recognition that each has legitimate interests in the area and a responsibility commensurate with its strength to see that a quadrilateral relationship contributes to stability rather than chaos.'

Robert Ingersoll

27 March 1974**

* Hanoi Home Service, 1 January 1974, SWB/FE/4490/A3/2.

** Stability and Change in East Asia, Address by the Assist-

ant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, in DSB, 15 April 1974, p.393.

VI : I

RECONSTRUCTION VERSUS CONFLICT

DECEMBER 1973 - JANUARY 1974

The escalation in South Vietnam towards virtual fullscale war forced the convening of another session on 20 December 1973 of the Paris talks between Kissinger and Le Duc Tho. Both Hanoi and Saigon had called attention in the interim to the increased fighting and warned that largescale war might again break out but it was not clear why Kissinger and Tho agreed to another meeting. Neither side had suggested the Paris Agreement be renegotiated nor were they prepared to take new steps to put the accord into effect.

The circumstances leading to the meeting however might be examined. On 11 December Pham Van Dong made an unexpected initiative towards Tokyo for 'improved relations' urging the Japanese Government to clear a 'number of obstacles' standing in the way of the furtherance of relations between the two countries which had yet to become 'normal'.[1] The timing of the request was significant, coming a mere 11

days after the unexpected suspension by Hanoi of Japanese participation in oil development described earlier (See p.341). In the context of detente, the Jackson-Vanik Amendment was being approved in Washington the same day. It is not the purpose of this thesis to pursue that development but the amendment probably left some effect on US attempts to influence Hanoi through Moscow. Writing in 1988 Nixon said,

'In 1973, Congress passed the Jackson-Vanik amendment that blocked the granting of most-favoured nation trading status to the Soviet Union until its citizens were allowed to emigrate freely. As a result, the most important positive incentive for Soviet restraint was revoked.'[2]

Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko however suggested in 1989 that 'many initiatives' which would have smoothed Soviet-US relations were 'deliberately slowed down' by endless new conditions connected with the question of emigration: a 'pathetic example' of which was the Jackson-Vanik Amendment.[3] 'In effect', Gromyko continued, 'it froze Soviet -US trade by linking it to Soviet policy on Jewish emigration.'

It would appear that the US sought to keep the connection through Moscow to pressure Hanoi. On 13 December the VNA officially announced that Kissinger and Tho would meet in Paris on 20 December.[4] In Washington Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin on 13 December met privately with Nixon, described by Kissinger as 'an extraordinary event'.[5]

Saigon disclosed on 14 December that it had been informed 'in advance' of the Paris meeting, arranged owing to the 'critical situation' in the South.[6] Its Foreign Minister Vuong Van Bac, who replaced Tran Van Lam on 9 July 1973, was in Europe but it was not known if he would attend the meeting the content of which would be made known to the RVN if it concerned the latter.

Speculation was rife that the talks had been arranged through 'mutual consultation'; Le Duc Tho's arrival in Paris on 17 December however suggested that they had been proposed 'at the request' of the US side.[7] Soviet sources were reported on 21 December to have said that Moscow played an important 'behind-the-scenes' role in arranging the meeting since both Hanoi and the NLF were becoming 'increasingly restive and impatient'.[8] The Soviet press had lately given more attention, it is true, to the deteriorating military situation, warning of the danger of renewed fullscale conflict unless steps were taken to bolster the ceasefire agreement.[9] It might be noted at the same time that the Hanoi visit from 19 December of a Supreme Soviet delegation was described as a 'new manifestation of the friendship and revolutionary solidarity that had increasingly developed' between the two peoples.[10]

Very little is known of the talks. The main item was apparently an exchange of charges about the failure to put the ceasefire agreement into effect. Hanoi blamed the US for the lack of

a political settlement between the South Vietnamese and the PRG. Le Duc Tho however rejected charges on 21December that Indochina had been sacrificed to the interests of accomodation between the Soviet Union and the US. The improvement of relations, he said, had not had 'any influence on our struggle'.[11] Alluding to charges by Hanoi and the NLF that the US had introduced up to 20,000 military advisers under civilian cover in South Vietnam in the guise of the Paris Agreement, Tho said that as long as the US continued its 'military interference' in the US, and used the Saigon regime for its 'neo-colonialist policies', the situation would remain tense and the US involvement would deepen.

In his memoirs, Kissinger's only reference to the talks - his last meeting with Tho - was to remark that the latter 'grew unbearably more insolent' as America's domestic divisions gradually opened up new and decisive strategic opportunities for Hanoi.[12] The Joint Statement of 20 December 1973 only disclosed that both sides 'exchanged views' on matters of mutual interest in the context of the current situation and would maintain 'this channel' for further discussions as warranted by events.[13]

At a news conference on 3 January 1974 Kissinger said Tho and himself had 'an agreement' not to discuss the substance of the talks.[14] The meeting, he said, revolved around a 'general review' of the situation in Vietnam with particular emphasis on measures that might be taken to ease it. Both parties were currently studying the situation and would be

'in touch' with each other in the next few weeks. The thrust of the talks, Kissinger revealed, concerned ways to alleviate the situation and not particular responses that might be made to 'this or that move'. Regarding the possibility of a North Vietnamese offensive, on narrow balance, he expected Hanoi to recognise that 'nobody's interest' would be served by an offensive in Vietnam.

It was suggested in early January that Le Duc Tho had hoped at the talks to effect an exchange promising military restraint in the South in return for a US pledge on reconstruction aid and pressure on Thieu to wind down his military operations against the NLF. Kissinger apparently refused to cooperate and interpreted Hanoi's wish to clinch an agreement as a sign of weakness. He was said to have made three demands: One that Hanoi call off its expected military offensive in the South; Two, for an accounting of US POWs still missing in action throughout Indochina; Three, for a strict observance of the Paris Agreement, especially Article 20.[15]

In this context Kissinger's reference on 27 December 1973 to the Nixon Doctrine was significant. The doctrine, Kissinger said, laid the basis for a fundamental realignment of the postwar period.[16] In the first phase, this meant the reduction of many of the US' overextended commitments. The Paris Agreement permitted a disengagement of American forces to leave the resolution of its political future to

negotiations among the Vietnamese parties and permit an 'evolution' that was to be the responsibility of those concerned. Increasingly the US-designed framework of peace for Vietnam was to be tied to the economic system created in the immediate postwar period. This would have as its basis a 'sense of participation' by all nations in an 'architectural design' that would require the commitment of succeeding administrations.

Japan was a crucial part of this design. Despite the 'temporary aberration' created by the energy crisis, Tokyo, Kissinger said, was developing a new and mature partnership with the US which entitled it to 'full consideration' as an equal partner worldwide.

What is clear in the wake of the Paris talks was that Hanoi had not altogether abandoned the option of reconstruction aid from either the US or Japan. In a significant development, Tokyo revealed on 22 December that Hanoi had made an agreement in principle to accept Japan's cooperation in the development of oil resources in the Tonkin Gulf.[17] For the first time Hanoi asked for Japanese economic cooperation in largescale reconstruction and development. The request, it was disclosed on 24 December, had been made through the Japan Institute for Scientific and Technological Exchange, a non-governmental organisation formed in May 1973 with an estimated 50 Japanese firms.[18] In return Hanoi assured Tokyo of a stable supply of raw materials

'including oil'. The Institute would subsequently call on the Japanese Government and industrial circles to map out specific plans for the extension of such economic cooperation. A fact-finding mission would also be sent in mid-January 1974 to explore further projects for private agreements in the DRV. Although 'technical and industrial development' implied for Hanoi heavy industry, the building of a petrochemical plant as well as the 'joint development' of oilfields, oil sands and shales were also envisaged.[19]

There was a distinction on North Vietnam's part however between Japanese government and private applications. To discourage competition, Hanoi on 22 December expressed its preference for the PDC to act as collective representative for private enterprise while the project might also be handled on a government-to-government basis.[20] The idea of immediate government intervention on behalf of private firms was dispelled by a report in Nikkan Kogyo on 26 December 1973.[21] It described Toyo Oil, Nikkyo Boeki and Japan Oil Engineering as expecting on 17 December to evolve a development formula, selection of a mining area and a development schedule to conclude negotiations with Hanoi on an oilfield 'within the year'.[22] General consensus was also reached on the adoption of the production-sharing formula. On 25 December final agreement was reached by Toyo Oil, expected to become the sole developer of resources in the Gulf. The project was to be undertaken under a 'production-sharing formula' with surveys on the deposits be-

ginning 'early in 1974'.[23]

Hanoi's initiatives with Japan raised problems with China. Six days after the conclusion of the Kissinger-Tho talks, Hanoi appeared intent on largescale reconstruction and production-shar-ing under which consultations with Peking were necessary. On 26 December Hanoi proposed talks with Peking to 'officially demarcate' their common boundary in the Tonkin Gulf (Bac-Bo) so that the DRV might use its part of territory for 'national reconstruction'.[24]

This proposal came at an interesting point. It was preceded by a visit to Hanoi - first mentioned on 26 December - by An Bingsheng, Secretary of Guangxi province who called on Hoang Quoc Viet (who visited Japan in November 1973) in his capacity as President of the Vietnam-China Friendship Association.[25] The Guangxi delegation then visited Ninh Binh province (27-29 December) and the Viet Bac Autonomous Region (2-5 January) where military figures like Major-General Chu Van Tan, featured prominently. A meeting was held in Hanoi on 6 January 1974 to welcome the Chinese delegation.

Although not known at the time, Hanoi consequently explained in 1979 that the Chinese had been 'increasing their acts of provocation and territorial encroachment' in the northern provinces from 1973 onwards, in an attempt to 'weaken North Vietnamese efforts at total liberation of South Vietnam'.[26]

China, it was also alleged, prevented the DRV from exploiting its natural resources which hindered its own economic rehabilitation and development programme.

According to the Vietnamese, Chinese Ambassador Wang Youping on 18 January 1974, informed DRV Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hoang Van Tien, of Peking's agreement to begin talks on the Tonkin Gulf.[27] Before official delineation of the gulf, Wang suggested that neither party permit a 'third country' to conduct surveys or prospecting work there since such operations were detrimental to the economic development and military security of both countries.[28] Hanoi later accused Peking of allowing foreign firms, without its concurrence, to explore seas under Vietnamese sovereignty.[29]

GLOSSARY OF ISLAND AND PLACE NAMES

	VIETNAMESE	CHINESE
Paracels	Hoang Sa (Yellow Sands)	Xisha (Western Sands)
Spratlys	Truong Sa (Central Sands)	Nansha (Southern Sands)
Gulf of Tonkin	Vinh Bac-Bo	Beibu Wan

The Chinese interpretation proved contrary. According to Peking, the Tonkin Gulf (Beibu Wan) had 'never been divid-

ed'.[30] Hanoi however apparently drew a dividing line close to Hainan Island to occupy two-thirds of the area. The Chinese therefore suggested 'more than once' that the two sides settle the division of the gulf on a 'fair and reasonable basis' taking the opportunity to stake their claim on some islands regarded as Chinese territory 'from a historical point of view'. One Vietnamese Vice-Minister, Peking charged, affirmed these islands as Chinese territory on 15 June 1956; Peking then issued its own declaration on 4 September 1958 claiming 'Taiwan and its surrounding islands, the Penghu, Dongsha, Xisha, Zhongsha and Nansha', which was supported by Premier Pham Van Dong ten days later.[31]

By this time developments in South Vietnam also caused the Chinese some anxiety. As we have seen earlier, Japan witnessed severe reverberations on account of the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war. In South Vietnam the effects were no less severe, as Ambassador Graham Martin revealed in an interview with the BBC in 1977:

'Two things came ..... in the fall of 1973. First was the Arab-Israel war when the American stockpiles were severely drawn down and with the absence of appropriations which would quickly replace those stockpiles in Europe and in the US. Then the pressures on the American military establishment to reach every conceivable source of supply or places where they could cut back. Then the rationale began that the

South Vietnamese were being too profligate, for example in the expenditure of ammunition - although some military people in whose confidence I have every reason to rely, have estimated that a South Vietnamese division, for example, was expending ten per cent of the ammunition under active combat conditions that an American division would have expended in a static or non-active hostilities sort of situation.

The second thing was the increasingly effective propaganda campaign being waged in the US without effective counter from the Executive Branch, which led to Congressional reductions in the monies appropriated for military support to South Vietnam at the very time that the prices for the items were being vastly escalated. Now the combination of these brought about what the military logisticians have estimated to be an eighty per cent reduction in effective military aid, without any knowledge or forewarning to the South Vietnamese that this would take place.'[32]

Since oil was critical to fight the continuing war, Saigon in desperation, placed great hope on oil exploitation. According to Cao Van Vien, 'among other financial resources', oil, it was believed, might supplement military aid or eventually replace it altogether.[33] The Viet Cong were quick to seize the opportunities this situation presented. In their most successful act of economic sabotage the Viet Cong on 3 December 1973 had fired 50 rounds of rockets into Nha Be petroleum depot, the largest gasoline storage area destroying half the nation's stocks. A series of

austerity measures to conserve energy were thus introduced. The situation was temporarily relieved on 12 December however when a US Defence Department statement said the nation's war reserves of oil in the Pacific would supply South Vietnam and Cambodia with their daily 'minimum requirments'.[34] On 2 January 1974 however, the Department of Defence Appropriations Act placed a ceiling of US$1,126 million on US military aid to South Vietnam and Laos and banned the shipment of petroleum fuels from continental USA to Southeast Asia for use by foreign forces.[35] At the same time Congress expressed the growing American reluctance to further shoulder the defence commitment to South Vietnam by suggesting a deadly cutoff in oil to that nation. In his interview mentioned above, Martin recalled that from his position in Saigon, the 'first cable' referring to this was in December 1973 when 'the process had already begun' as a result of the pressures on the Pentagon from the diversion of stocks into the Middle East. But he also emphasised that the beginnings of the pressures of Watergate from the autumn of 1973 which escalated throughout 1974 until Nixon's departure in August, 'did not lead to a great concentration of either thought or effort in the Executive Branch of the US on Vietnam'.[36]

The tendency by early 1974 to abandon Saigon to its own initiatives forced the RVN to pursue its oil strategy with some vigour. Foreign Minister Vuong Van Bac's visits to Saudi Arabia in December 1973 and Japan (8-10 January) were

steps in this direction.[37] Economic cooperation and the 'continuous extension' of aid for 1973-74 were discussed when Bac called on Ohira in Tokyo. An attempt was made to augment the trend of Japanese economic activities in South Vietnam by the pledge that private Japanese capital might make a 'more positive advance' from 1 January 1974.[38] Oil development was part of this equation. A member of the National Petroleum Commmission (NPC), Bac himself participated in formulating the draft Petroleum Law. Despite Japan's unsuccessful bidding in July 1973, Bac assured Ohira that the general outlook for oil development in South Vietnam was good. Although consumption had increased, the oil crisis did not apparently affect South Vietnam since the greater danger was the depletion of Saigon's currency reserves pushing up import costs.

Under a Premier's decree dated 5 January 1974, Saigon established its National Energy Commission (NEC) with representatives from the Atomic Energy Agency, the National Petroleum Commission and the National Mekong Commission.[39] Designed to research into sources of energy 'under all forms', the NEC would promote their exploitation and consumption: to present to the RVN government projects on the expansion and improvement of energy usage. This was a logical step following the granting of concessions to international consortia in mid-July 1973 and the move on 6 September to consoli-

date Saigon's authority over the Spratly Islands - administered by Phuoc Tuy province - when an executive order was passed by the Ministry of the Interior to deploy RVN units to occupy them.[40]

These developments and their probable effects on territorial claims disturbed the Chinese. Referring to the 6 September 1973 edict, Peking on 11 January 1974 accused Saigon of incorporating 'more than ten' of China's Nansha Islands under Phuoc Tuy province and of intensifying since 1973 its attempts at permanent seizure of China's Spratly archipelago.[41] Saigon's initial response on 12 January alleged the Spratlys fell 'completely' under RVN sovereignty, affirmed at the San Francisco peace conference of 14 January 1951 when Japan relinquished all territories captured by force during World War II.[42] On 14 January however Saigon conceded that although the question of sovereignty was 'sometimes' raised by 'other nations' over the Paracels and Spratlys, the issue had been shelved since 'no nation or government' could furnish data proving sovereignty over either.[43] The RVN Navy besides regularly defended these islands and exploited their resources.

The result of these exchanges was nothing less than catastrophic. Peking accused Saigon of armed occupation since 15 January of its islands with cutters, 2,800 ton vessels of World War II vintage.[44] Following reprisals by both sides in succeeding days, an 'invasion' of the islands and a sea battle ensued on 19 January in the area of the Paracels between the RVN and Chinese

navies. In a final devastating attack after an amphibious landing, Chinese MIGs on 20 January 1974 bombed a chain of three islands in the archipelago Peking issued on the same day a strong reinstatement of its claims: emphasising pointedly that the 'under-sea resources' in the Paracels' vicinity belonged to China.[45]

Neither the South Vietnamese Navy, trained and equipped for coastal and river combat nor the Air Force, designed for shortrange support of ground troops, could do anything to stop the Chinese. Saigon refused to concede defeat and compared Chinese 'aggression' against the Paracels on 20 January to its annexation of Tibet in 1956. A protest was made on the same day to the UN Security Council demanding the convening of an urgent meeting and an appeal was simultaneously made to the Secretary General.[46]

Within South Vietnam a diplomatic campaign was mounted to seek world support against Chinese occupation of the Paracels. A Kyodo report on 21 January 1974 referred to pressure from the US - with a view to improved relations with China - on Saigon to 'concede defeat' so that no further action was taken.[47] Speculation in Saigon however suggested that US Ambassador Graham Martin refused South Vietnamese requests for help from the Seventh Fleet.[48] Conflicting claims from the State and Defence Departments said alternatively that the Seventh Fleet had been cautioned not to get involved in the fighting between South Vietnam and China.

On 25 January 1974 South Vietnam suddenly relinquished

its efforts to air its protest against China in the Security Council. A letter from the RVN, released by the President of the Council, said Saigon saw no hope of constructive debate since it could not muster the votes because of opposition from China who had veto power in the Council.[49] In Saigon a statement from Vuong Van Bac on 26 January said the RVN was not seeking war with China 'or any other country' and denied his government had asked for the Seventh Fleet's intervention.[50] Bac also proposed that Saigon and Hanoi establish diplomatic relations 'in a new effort to break the deadlock' and to explore all paths susceptible to lead to peace. It was made in the hope that the two sides could discuss 'all measures' aimed at reducing tension in South Vietnam as well as at defending the 'long-range interests' of the Vietnamese nation. Citing Section 15C of the Paris Agreement as the basis of his offer to Hanoi, Bac suggested both Vietnams start prompt negotiations; he was ready to meet his North Vietnamese counterpart.[51]

These reversals by Saigon might be understood in retrospect against the wider shifts of American policy towards Vietnam which became more clearly evident by early 1974.

VI : II

THE OVEREXTENDED COMMITMENT

JANUARY - APRIL 1974

'No treaty, no commitment, no alliance is immutable. Times and circumstances change. Thus, while maintaining our commitments, we have sought to adjust our responsibilities with our role in keeping with changing conditions in the region.'

Robert Ingersoll

3 April 1974*

* United States Defence Commitments in Asia, Statement by Robert Ingersoll on 3 April 1974, in DSB, 29 April 1974, p.473.

By the beginning of 1974 the terms of debate in Washington about the nature of the war in Vietnam appreciated that neither Hanoi, the Viet Cong nor Saigon were in a position to make sufficient concessions to bring about a political settlement that year. No distinct momentum in favour of either of these parties could be established. US administration strategy for dealing with this situation broadly embraced two aspects.

The first priority was to continue strengthening South Vietnam's military capability. The Nixon Administration was moving ahead with plans to ask Congress for increased arms

aid to Saigon during the current fiscal year. Nixon, Kissinger and Defence Secretary James Schlesinger were known to have approved the general planning but had not as yet reached a decision on the total aid package or on how it might be presented to Congress. Developments of summer 1973 had hastened arms aid planning and between October and November, new US Ambassador to the RVN, Graham Martin had apparently sent Washington 'Saigon's want list' for military items totalling more than US$1 billion. This was followed by a cable to Nixon himself.[52]

Doubts were raised in the Pentagon about the timing and the legality of such a request to Congress in the opening months of 1974. Opinion polarised roughly into two groups: One group led by Ambassador Martin - described as the 'prime mover' in the campaign was supported by staff in the National Security Council; Another group consisted of key elements in the Pentagon and the State Department who intended to keep total arms aid down to US$400 million. The debate was exacerbated by a disclosure on 27 January by the US Embassy in Saigon that Washington had provided South Vietnam with approximately US$284.7 million worth of weapons and ammunition since the signature of the Paris Agreement.[53]

Another aspect of US strategy in Vietnam was to keep alive the threat of renewed American intervention. On 10 January 1974 Schlesinger said that a North Vietnamese invasion of the South would necessitate a rapid decision by Nixon whether

to recommend a reintroduction of American airpower.[54] Barring a 'high likelihood' of an increase of hostilities in South Vietnam, the probability of all-out invasion by the North was 'relatively constrained' since Hanoi might not discount the probability of aerial bombardment if they did invade. Apart from the threat of bombing the recapture of Le Minh, overrun by the communists in September 1973, by Thieu's forces on 14 January 1974 was a boost for the ARVN.

Against this background, Hanoi made a little-publicised gesture to the US. To mark the first anniversary of the Paris Agreement, Hanoi on 17 January issued a document which requested the setting up of diplomatic relations with the US 'subject to certain conditions'. The 15,000-word document reviewed by Ngo Dien, Assistant to Foreign Minister Nguyen Duy Trinh, emphasised that Hanoi would consider the 'norm -alisation of relations' with the US if Washington disengaged completely from South Vietnam and 'fulfilled its obligations' to reconstruct North Vietnam. The expression 'normalisation' represented a major departure. It was also significant that Hanoi's call came a month after the Paris talks when no official communique had been issued. The document was said to discuss: One, two opposing policies in the implementation of the Paris Agreement; Two, the implementation of the accord in Vietnam in the past year; Three, urgent problems of the move -ment to maintain and consolidate lasting peace in Vietnam.[55] But there was no public response from the US.

At this point we need to look again at US policy. On 8 Jan -uary 1974 former Ambassador to Japan, Robert Ingersoll assumed the post of Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. Pledging to contribute to US diplomacy with reference to the 'Kissinger structure', Ingersoll was scheduled to embark on a visit from 16 January to the 14 nations under his charge 'including China and Japan'.[56]

One aspect of his visit merits attention. It was speculated by the Japanese press that China was to have been his first stop.[57] Nothing else has been revealed. Had this been the case, Ingersoll's arrival in China would have coincided with Hanoi's 17 January proposal. He would also have been in China from 17 to 21 January, at the height of the Paracels incident. We know that he proceeded to Japan (21-25 January) where his discussions with Ohira centred on the resolution of the oil crisis. The role of Japan in the security of the region and an exchange of views on the Southeast Asian situation was also made.[58]

In Washington at this point, Deputy Secretary of State Kenneth Rush on 21 January said that the US 'must expect and accept change' in Asia.[59] Japan was the US' 'major partner' in this endeavour. US policies in Asia had two basic and mutually reinforcing purposes: to build a network of mutual understanding and mutual restraint among the major powers in Asia: Japan, China, the Soviet Union and the US; and to pursue with the smaller nations of Asia, the Nixon Doc-

trine's goal of 'shared responsiilities and shared burdens' for development and defence.

The consequences of these pronouncments were already felt in Tokyo. Significantly, after Ingersoll's visit, Ohira on 28 January hardened his stance towards Hanoi by repeating that Japan would continue to recognise the RVN as the 'sole legitimate government of Vietnam'; Japanese aid would be extended categorically through the Thieu administration to the 'whole of Vietnam'.[60] A deadlock in Japan-DRV relations was increasingly evident from this time until April 1974.

Ingersoll continued his tour with visits to Saigon (3-5 Feb -ruary) and Phnom Penh (5 February) which were castigated by Liberation Radio as being contrived to 'bolster' the Thieu regime and the Lon Nol 'clique' to implement the Nixon Doc -trine.[61] The content of Ingersoll's talks with Premier Tran Thien Khiem and Vuong Van Bac in Saigon was not divulged. In a later reference to his visit there Ingersoll said the Paris Agreement established a 'potentially workable framework' for a political solution to the conflict. The US would also continue to provide the RVN with 'needed military and economic assistance' as allowed under the accord, since the Saigon government was 'vigorous and viable'.[62]

Ingersoll's Saigon visit takes on a new significance in the light of subsequent relevations. It had been preceded, according to Hanoi in 1982, by a 'secret telegramme' dated 2 February 1974 later discovered in the Foreign Ministry

archives following the 'liberation' of Saigon in 1975.[63] The telegramme, Hanoi continued, from South Vietnamese Ambassador in Washington, Tran Kim Phuong to Vuong Van Bac said Kissinger saw the Paracels incident as a 'marginal problem' even an 'inconvenience' within the framework of joint efforts by the US and China to 'contain' North Vietnam. Washington had urged a spirit of compromise, promising Saigon military assistance against North Vietnam but not against China. Hanoi also disclosed that 'conver-sations between the then Secretary of State Arthur Hummel and members of the National Security Council' suggested Kissinger wanted to 'minimise' the effects of the incident, to concentrate instead on the 'sole problem' of stepping up military aid to the RVN.[64] Kissinger, together with 'J.William Fulbright, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Congressman Rog (Rogers) Morton, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee', pressured Saigon to desist from possible war with China. Overall, both the US and China appeared determined to cement their new alliance at the expense of their respective allies.

Nothing daunted, Saigon continued throughout Ingersoll's visit to stake a claim on the islands. A semi-official newspaper, Dan Chu, on 2 February reported that consultations had been convened among representatives of the RVN, Taiwan and the Philippines for a peaceful solution to the dispute, pledging to

'unite forces' when necessary, against armed intervention by China.[65] On the same day the RVN also landed reinforcements - without incident - on the Spratlys; pointedly denying on 4 February that there was an anti-China military alliance formed collectively by itself, Taiwan and the Philippines over the islands.[66] Although a Chinese Foreign Ministry statement simultaneously warned South Vietnam against 'any pretext' for infringements on Chinese territory, the event passed without incident. What followed was an RVN statement on 5 February reasserting sovereignty over the islands with intent to 'recapture all islands' of the Paracel and Spratly archipelagoes even if it meant war with 'China, Taiwan or the Philippines'.[67] The Paracels have remained however in Chinese hands.

Linked to the question of bolstering South Vietnam's survival was US assistance in its postwar reconstruction. A private delegation including Elbridge Durbrow, former US Ambassador to South Vietnam (1957-61) visited Saigon (14-23 February). Invited by the private Vietnam Foreign Relations Council formed to attract foreign investment, South Vietnam, the delegation said, stood on the 'threshold of viability' and was 'truly capable' of going it alone.[68]

In Saigon the decision was made on 13 February by the Council of Ministers to go ahead with oil drilling operations and to authorise the extraction of oil bids.[69] Khuong Huu

Dieu, Director-General of the Industrial Development Bank of Vietnam said the next day that major drilling companies were expected to begin work on the South Vietnamese continental shelf in July 1974.[70] Described as the 'most promising source' of South Vietnam's future industrialisation, continental shelf oil outwitted the country's limited coal and charcoal resources; hydroelectric power by contrast required large investment capital which could only be realised through 'friendly countries' aid'. A decision was made on 21 February to open bids for oil exploration and exploitation of 33 blocks of the continental shelf.[71] Only countries selected by the National Petroleum Commission for their 'financial, technical and marketing competence' could submit proposals to obtain exploration concessions 'within 30 days' (by 29 March 1974) of receiving the relevant documents. Concessions were also reserved for future bids by companies 'expected to contest for new blocks' from Australia, Japan, West Germany and the USA. The exploitation of oil was anticipated to begin in earnest by the end of 1974.

The confirmation in early 1974 of oil on the South Vietnamese continental shelf was critical. On government orders, according to Cao Van Vien, the JGS secretly worked out a plan - implemented unannounced during 1974 - to trim the total strength of the armed forces to 1 million, since the problem of maintaining full strength had proven difficult.[72] An

initial 4,000 servicemen were released allowing them to be earmarked for transfer to jobs in the civilian sector so that by the end of 1974 the total strength of the armed forces would drop from 1,100,000 to 996,000.

This move proved to be timely. In Washington the percep -tion of the war in Vietnam appeared in the interim to have undergone considerable change.

By 25 February 1974 the American involvement in South Vietnam was described as having descended from a peak of warfare to a high plateau of substantial support.[73] Large num -bers of American citizens were reported to have become integ -ral parts of the South Vietnamese supply, transport and intelligence systems, including not only Vietnam-based technicians but also 'Pentagon-based' generals to periodically ascertain the needs of the RVN. The total budgeted cost of military aid to South Vietnam was US$813 million in fiscal 1974 with the Pentagon asking Congress for US$1.45 billion in 1975 with most of the increase probably going for ammunition which the South Vietnamese forces had expended at a high rate. The real costs of military support were estimated to be higher since some of the aid went in through economic programmes for the Thieu Government's defence budget.

A special Congressional study mission was touring the RVN (25-28 February) at the time whose main purpose - according to Peter H.B.Frelinghuysen (Republican, New Jersey) in a later report dated 24 May 1974 to the House Foreign Affairs Commi-

ttee - was to present the case for a 'reasonable level of military and economic assistance' to South Vietnam.[74] The process of 'Vietnamisation' was virtually complete, he said, and the 'recent success' of ARVN forces in carrying out this responsibility with -out US assistance led to a new attitude of self -reliance: The 'beleaguered' RVN government could thus make the transition to 'economic self-sufficiency'.

Current North Vietnamese strategy was however related to their political struggle as the ceasefire was 'relatively unrewarding'. Militarily, Frelinghuysen warned, Hanoi had strengthened its position in the South since the ceasefire.The situation remain -ed threatening since a major North Vietnamese objective was to develop a secure base of operations along the western border of South Vietnam.

A 'fullscale assault' by North Vietnam was not however imminent. Although the DRV had stockpiled sufficient ordna -nce for one year of fighting at current levels, it was question -able whether Hanoi could sustain it over the longterm since it faced 'uncertainty' over the level of Soviet and Chinese support. Hanoi would continue to blunt the RVN through selected attacks to prepare for a possible assault within two or more years.[75]

The general morale of ARVN and the current effectiveness of the RVN - particularly in the recapture of Le Minh on 14 January 1974 - were considered major deterrents to a fullscale offensive from the North. The report suggested

maintaining a 'reasonable military balance' since 'if supplies of equipment and ammunition are excessive we run the obvious risk of stimulating an equivalent move by its allies'. If however 'less is done than is reasonable' then this could contribute not towards peace in Vietnam but to the likelihood of renewed hostilities.[76]

Despite the guarded optimism of the report a statement on 28 February by the Defence Department warned that North Vietnam had stockpiled more than 150,000 tons of military supplies in South Vietnam since January 1973 and that the strength of the communist forces had increased from 140,000 then to 185,000.[77]

In South Vietnam some changes were also made in anticipation of future contingencies. The RVN witnessed a shuffle of senior officers in March 1974, according to Vien, and a 'contingency plan' was also worked out jointly with the US DAO (Defence Attache Office) in a top secret arrangement whereby the US agreed to provide South Vietnam's armed forces with appropriate support when required.[78] A system of hot lines had been established between the US Support Command at Nakhon Phanom in Thailand and the JGS in which the latter's Air Force Headquarters and all four corps commanders were also given direct access to the system.

This probably also explains why the costs of military and economic aid programmes in Southeast Asia which had dropped sharply with the withdrawal of US forces from Sou-

th Vietnam, began in March 1974 to rise sharply again. Attributing the increase to inflation, the Administration proposed in early March to give South Vietnam about US $2.4 billion in such aid in the fiscal year beginning 1 July 1974, a 65% increase from the level of the previous year.[79]

The situation was not without controversy. A report released on 6 March by the General Accounting Office came amid charges that the Pentagon had hidden from Congress the total amount of support given to Saigon. The Defence Department, it said, had 'not reflected the entire value of contracts' for the Saigon Government. The Pentagon had underestimated, according to a 1972 report, the amount of 1971 aid to Saigon by some US$400 million which was more than a quarter of the total.[80]

In his annual defence posture statement presented to Congress at the beginning of March 1974, Defence Secretary Schlesinger offered three reasons for the proposed increase in military aid to South Vietnam:

- South Vietnamese military consumption had increased beyond anticipated levels because of the ongoing ceasefire;
- 'Far fewer' military aid funds from previous years were available to meet current South Vietnamese requirements;
- In terms of replacement material the US was actually behind and 'greater efforts' had to be made in the next fiscal year.[81]

It was also revealed that much of the economic aid pack-

age to South Vietnam - officially known as 'Postwar Reconstruction Assistance' - would be used to finance imports since Saigon's foreign reserves were in decline. In a reversal of the situation outlined in January, the US would now finance 'all South Vietnamese imports' of petroleum products for both the military and civilian uses.

Criticism of American attempts to shore up the Thieu regime had intensified in mid-March 1974. The proposed increase in military aid for South Vietnam was becoming one of the most controversial items of the Pentagon's request for US$6.2 billion in additional funds for the current fiscal year. The Defence Department warned on 18 March that without some immediate budgetary help from Congress it would 'run short' of funds by mid-April to support the military operations of the South Vietnamese armed forces.[82] By 19 March concerted opposition to the Administration's request for a US$474 million emergency increase in military aid to the RVN had begun to gain momentum in the Senate.[83]

Senator Edward Kennedy (Democrat; Massachusetts), co-sponsor of a Senate Amendment to block Administration efforts to raise military aid to South Vietnam, had written to Kissinger on 13 March 1974. The letter, made public on 17 March, was directed at a telegramme allegedly sent from Saigon by Ambassador Martin on 6 March to the State Department.[84] Kennedy accused Martin of ignoring the concerns of Congress over the level of US involvement in the political and milit-

ary confrontations of Indochina. He also asked Kissinger to explain the continued US military and economic aid to South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

On 31 March Kennedy released a letter dated 25 March 1974 from Kissinger responding to the Senator's queries on Indochina policy issues 'enclosing comment on nine specific issues' (Appendix III). The US, Kissinger said, had committed itself 'politically and morally' by signing the Paris Agreement, to giving longterm military and economic aid to South Vietnam. There were two basic themes in US Indochina policy, he explained, that a secure peace in Indochina was an 'important element' in US efforts to achieve a worldwide structure of peace and vice versa; and to discourage the takeover of various parts of Indochina by force. Although the US had 'no bilateral written commitment' to the RVN, under the accord, Washington committed itself to 'strengthening the conditions which made the ceasefire possible'and to the goal of the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination. The US would continue with these commitments to provide the RVN with the 'means necessary' for its self-defence and its economic viability.

Kissinger's letter seemed to Kennedy to propound a 'new rationalisation' for the continued US heavy involvement in Indochina. Criticising the policy as 'contrary to the new directions' set by Congress in 1973, Kennedy on 2 April made public the confidential telegramme sent by Martin on 6 March

1974 to Kissinger. In this the Ambassador suggested that Kennedy not be given 'the tactical advantage of an honest and detailed answer' to questions he had raised about US policy in Indochina.[85]

Of direct relevance to Vietnam was Kissinger's reference in his 25 March letter to a 'follow-on meeting' proposed in November 1973 for February 1974 to discuss the formation of the Indochina consultative group. The 'reactions of the participating countries to the energy crisis' and to the Congressional decision on AID replenishment, led, he said, to the postponement of the meeting till late spring.

This might be linked to a report on 13 March 1974 which mentioned a delay in the implementation of an IBRD plan for an aid consortium to all four Indochinese countries.[86] The proposal, sponsored jointly by the World Bank and the ADB, and strongly backed by the US and Japan, originated in a request from President Thieu to the World Bank (See p. 119). Japan suggested that the consortium be enlarged to include all Indochina. We now know that the World Bank had notified the countries concerned that it was cancelling the meeting - originally scheduled for Paris in February - because the timing was 'not propitious'. Another meeting was tentatively set for 'May or June' 1974.

The postponement of the consortium arrangement was linked to the economic turmoil caused by the energy crisis which 'compelled' all donor-nations to review their aid

policies with greater emphasis on spending funds at home. Reservations among 'some countries' had also been expres-sed about the World Bank 'performing any function' that might benefit the Thieu government. Japan dispelled these reservations about World Bank assistance to Saigon by Tokyo's suggestion that 'subgroups' be formed so that aid-donor countries might assist 'only nations they favoured'. This compromise did not suppress the doubts of some donor-states; the Scandinavian nations being 'particularly sceptical' and Sweden's sympathy towards the North Vietnamese noted.[87] Most donor-nations had planned to assist all Indochinese countries but discussions were held in abeyance because of the continued fighting in South Vietnam.

The future of the consortium now uncertain, Hanoi continued nevertheless to stress its preference for aid on a bilateral basis. As we shall see later, Pham Van Dong's visit to Sweden in mid-April 1974 was a step in this direction.

The delay might also be understood against the failure of the Nixon Administration to appoint, since Ingersoll's departure in December 1973, a new Ambassador to Tokyo. A disclosure on 14 March said that in an 'unexpected move', Japan's Ambassador to Washington 'recently' called on Ingersoll to express Tokyo's anxieties about the vacant post.[88] About ten days later, prior to Kissinger's Moscow visit (24-28 March) James Hodgson, the Lockheed Vice-President was named the new ambassador. Hodgson was not how-

ever approved by the Senate until 18 June and was eventually scheduled to arrive in Tokyo to take up his post on 15 July 1974.[89]

It is significant that Kissinger sent his letter to Kennedy - on 25 March 1974 - while he was en route to Moscow. On a wider level, the US commitment to Vietnam and the postponement of the aid consortium meeting might be examined against the background of the change in the state of international communist relations in the first quarter of 1974.

USA	JAPAN	NORTH VIETNAM	SOUTH VIETNAM
		30 November 1973: Hanoi declines Tokyo's offer of oil development on Tonkin Gulf.	
11 December: Jackson-Vanik Amendment being passed.		11 December: Pham Van Dong on relations with Japan.	
			12 December: US Defence Department says Vietnamese armed forces supplied by war reserves of oil in Pacific.
13 December: Nixon-Dobrynin talks.		13 December: VNA announces Kissinger-Tho talks in Paris on 20 December.	14 December: Saigon reveals informed in advance of Paris meeting.
20 December, Paris: Kissinger-Le Duc Tho talks.			
		22 December: DRV accepts Japanese offer of oil exploration on Tonkin Gulf.	
		25 December: DRV seeks economic cooperation of Japan.	
	26 December: Japan discloses exploration of Tonkin Gulf oil.	26 December: Hanoi proposes talks with Peking on Sino-Vietnamese boundary on gulf sea; An Bingsheng of Guangxi reported to have met Hoang Quoc Viet.	Late December 1973: Vuong Van Bac visits Saudi Arabia.
27 December: Kissinger on Nixon Doctrine.		27-29 December: An in Ninh Binh.	
2 January 1974: Defence Department Appropriation bans shipment of petroleum from continental USA to Southeast Asia.		2-5 January 1974: An in Viet-Bac Autonomous Region.	
		6 January: Sino-Vietnamese Friendship meeting.	5 January: National Energy Commission set up.
8 January: Robert Ingersoll assumes post of Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs.	8-10 January: Vuong Van Bac visits Japan.		
			14 January: Saigon on Paracel islands.
			16 January: Saigon stakes claim on islands.
16 January: Ingersoll departs for tour of East Asia		17 January: Hanoi makes overture to US on diplomatic relations.	17-19 January: Tension heightens between Peking and Saigon over Paracels.
			19 January: Sea battle between PRC and RVN units in vicinity of Paracels.
			20 January: RVN lodges protest to Security Council.
			21 January: Kyodo reports pressure from US on Saigon

21-25 January: Ingersoll in Japan.

28 January: Ohira on no Japanese recognition of PRG.

25 January: RVN reliquishes efforts to air protest against China at UN; Vuong Van Bac proposes Saigon resume relations with Hanoi.

2 February: Telegramme from Tran Kim Phuong in Washington to Vuong Van Bac in Saigon, revealed by Hanoi in 1984.

11-13 February: Washington Energy Conference.

3-5 February: Ingersoll in Saigon.

13 February: Saigon Council of Ministers to go ahead with oil drilling operations.

14 February: Oil drilling to begin in 1974.

14-23 February: Elbridge Durbrow delegation in RVN.

21 February: Saigon decision to open bids for oil exploration.

23-28 February: Congressional delegation by Frelinghuysen to South Vietnam.

INTER-COMMUNIST RELATIONS

A part of US strategy during this period was to continue to seek Moscow and Peking's support to restrain Hanoi. Kissinger sought to show the connection between keeping the pressure on in Vietnam while improving relations with Hanoi's two allies, who might limit their arms shipments to it, an extension of policy enacted from mid-1973 onwards.

Sino-Soviet relations had been marred in one of the most dramatic incidents in recent months by the Marchenko affair. Five Soviet citizens including three diplomats were expelled from China on 19 January on espionage charges.[90]

On the level of US-Soviet relations Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko was scheduled to arrive in Washington on 3 February 1974 for the first Soviet-American talks in nearly eight months. Although the Gromyko-Kissinger talks of 4-5 February were said to have focused on the Middle East and Soviet-American relations, they also covered 'areas of mutual interest' including possibly, Vietnam.[91]

In this connection, Ingersoll, who visited Saigon at this juncture (3-5 February) referred on 27 March to the 'other major powers' directly or indirectly involved in the Vietnam conflict being obligated to uphold the provisions of the Paris Agreement. The USSR and China remained 'basically committed' to the evolution of peace in Vietnam within the Agree-

ment's framework, and had urged restraint on Hanoi's part.[92] Ingersoll continued to believe that Hanoi's perception of the importance Moscow and Peking attached to their relations with Washington would inhibit renewed Vietnamese largescale offensive action.

During the third week of March Hanoi was simultaneously strengthening ties with the communist bloc while seeking aid from both socialist and non-socialist countries: Pham Van Dong and Foreign Minister Nguyen Duy Trinh left on a tour of Cuba, Hungary, Algeria, Yugoslavia and Sweden (18 March-16 April). The delegation included specialists from agriculture, science and technology as well as military affairs suggesting that questions relating to these matters might have been prominent.[93]

Dong visited Moscow (19-22 March) prior to Kissinger's visit during which Moscow broadcast a scathing attack on Peking's attempts to prevent Soviet-Japanese cooperation. 'Recent events', Moscow said on 19 March, had shown that Peking leaders could not tolerate the 'steady development of economic, political and cultural relations' between the Soviet Union and Japan and were 'frantically trying to complicate' the relations between the two countries.[94] 'Facts had shown, Moscow continued, that Peking was 'openly trying' to ignore the rights of Japan which was 'determined to establish relations with the Soviet Union and other countries'; a reference perhaps to the deadlock in DRV-Japan relations. On the same day Moscow

accused Saigon of 'deliberately creating tension' in the South and 'of slandering the PRG' to distract attention from its economic difficulties. It also broadcast a news item that the US intended to increase military aid to South Vietnam.[95]

In Moscow Dong's visit affirmed on 20 March the 'unswerving solidarity' of the Soviet Union with the efforts of the DRV and the PRG to ensure the 'scrupulous and complete implementation' of the Paris Agreement on a 'just settlement of the internal problems of South Vietnam and the establishment of a durable peace there.[96] 'Comprehensive Soviet-Vietnamese cooperation' and several other problems of mutual interest were also discussed. Kosygin had expressed support for the policy mapped out by the VWP aimed at 'speedy reconstruction of the economy and the construction of a 'material and technical basis' for socialism in the DRV.

But Hanoi had not relinquished its hopes for 'unconditional aid'. On 24 March 1974 the day Kissinger arrived in Moscow Nhan Dan said the USA 'cannot evade its heavy responsibility' and must 'seriously implement' Article 21.[97] Only thus would it be able to create 'favourable conditions' for the establishment of 'new, equal and mutually beneficial relations' between the DRV and the USA. While denying that Hanoi wanted US financial aid in exchange for a promise not to launch or support largescale military offensives in South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, Nhan Dan on 27 March alluded to the possible normalisation of relations which it said were aimed at Article 21 which called for 'unconditional aid'.[98]

In Moscow (24-28 March) Kissinger's talks focused on the Middle East, trade, the mutual reduction of forces in Europe, and on plans for Nixon's visit to the Soviet Union in June. Official statements on these talks gave no indication that Vietnam had been dealt with in their discussions. TASS reported the opening of talks on 25 March between Brezhnev and Kissinger and said the latter had come to continue an exchange of views on a 'wide range of questions of mutual interest' in connection with the Nixon visit.[99] Kissinger, it continued, expected 'definite progress' to be achieved on a number of 'important questions'.

On 31 March after Kissinger's departure, TASS issued the sharpest attack on the US and demanded that it halted 'violations of the ban contained in the ceasefire agreement, on shipments and armaments, munitions and other material' into South Vietnam.[100] The Soviet stand carried the force almost of a government pronouncement and endorsed the North Vietnamese note of 22 March 1974 to the participants of the Paris Conference to end US violations of the Agreement.

The TASS statement which suggested stronger Soviet backing for Hanoi after Kissinger's visit might be juxtaposed against recent developments in Vietnam. The Military Commission of the Party Central Committee had met in Hanoi in Mar-ch 1974. Implementing the resolution of the 21st plenum, it assessed the situation to set forth the DRV's military position

for the 'next few years'.[101] It emphasised 'inflicting an import -ant defeat on the enemy's pacification and encroachment plans'. 'Conditions and opportunities' were discussed for bringing about a revolutionary high tide to win the 'greatest possible victory' for the revolution.

In the interim a high-level decision concerning the struggle in B-2 had also been made. In the spring of 1974 'after the new year of the Tiger', according to Van Tien Dung, a high-level conference of military cadres met at 33 Pham Ngu Lao Street in Hanoi. The deliberations focused on the resolution of the 21st Conference of the Party Central Committee to disseminate the March 1974 Resolution which 'had been approved' by the Politburo.[102] At the conference representatives from 'all battlefields, all services and branches, all corps and divisions, and all agencies of the General Command' were present. Le Duan and Le Duc Tho called on the conference to present the resolution of the 21st conference with instructions from the party and the state to the 'whole army to advance'.

The consensus reached might suggest a triumph for Le Duan whose address to the Trade Union Congress on 11 February lamented that the 'objectives' of the Southern revolution had 'yet to be attained' since the country was not reunified.[103] Invoking the 'Three Revolutions' to build the North speedily to take it to socialism and closely coordinate the economy and defence, Le Duan urged the 'completion' of the revolutionary stru-

ggle in the South. The 'ultimate reunification' of Vietnam and the fulfilment of 'internationalist obligations' toward the Lao and Khmer revolutions were also proposed.

Reconstruction had also been emphasised in Hanoi at the beginning of February. Le Thanh Nghi's address at a session of the National Assembly (4-9 February) praised postwar reconstruction achieved in 1973 and suggested closer economic, scientific and technical cooperation with socialist countries to expand foreign trade and economic and technical relations with other countries.[104] At the same session Pham Van Dong made what appeared to be a self-criticism with regard to the 'many current tasks' that had 'not yet been properly carried out'.[105] As we have seen earlier, Dong subsequently headed a delegation from mid-March onwards to secure aid from various quarters. During his absence DRV Government changes in early April appeared to emphasise the strategy of renewing the war.

It was made public on 2 April 1974 that a National Assembly Standing Committee reshuffle had 'recently' taken place in Hanoi involving ministerial changes which suggested a downgrading of reconstruction and the Japanese initiative.[106] The replacement of Nguyen Con by Le Thanh Nghi, concurrently to assume the post of Chairman of the State Planning Commission while retaining his Vice-Premiership and position in the politburo might possibly be linked to this development. Dinh Duc Thien who had been in charge of logistics in the South ceased to hold the Machinery and Metallurgy portfo-

lios to assume a 'new post'. Dang Thi's assumption of the post of Chairman of the National Reunification Committee might have emphasised an initiative in this direction.

In this respect what seemed to be a 'self-criticism' - revealed on 11 April - by Hoang Van Hoan, identified with the Japanese option, might also have been significant. The Party's line and policy had 'not been properly implemented', he said, conceding that it was 'necessary first to criticise ourselves'.[107] Hoan now acknowledged that the tasks for the North in 1974 and 1975 were to 'heighten vigilance' to achieve 'independence and democracy' in the South.

Hoan's 'self-criticism' and the de-emphasising of the Japanese initiative might have had some bearing on the announcement on 9 April which made it clear that the Japanese offer of non-reimbursable aid to the DRV would be seriously delayed.[108] Hanoi had apparently not responded to Tokyo's decision to carry over the appropriation of Yen 5 billion in the 1973 fiscal budget to fiscal 1974 which remained outstanding. Nor was there a reply to a Japanese request for a North Vietnamese plan for the utilisation of the aid. Actual contact between the two governments as we have seen, had made little progress since early January hindering economic cooperation, planned for instance, for the Tonkin Gulf. In this connection the deadlock in Japanese-North Vietnamese relations might have had some impact on the delay of the consortium arrangement. Given these circumstances it was hardly surprising that by mid-April serious doubts had arisen about any

prospects for the opening of the Japanese Embassy in Hanoi.[109]

By this time events in North Vietnam which would have a direct bearing on the South were taking place. The opening of the provincial local armed forces conferences on 4 April and the Central Military Emulation Campaign on 14 April con-sidered the 'building of powerful armed forces for combat' the most basic task.[110] The consequences for the South were dominated by the fall of Tong Le Chan on 12 April 1974 after a 411-day siege, with similar incidents in Chi Linh, Duc Hue Kontum and Pleiku. These were not sporadic incidents but together formed a coherent pattern as the last preparatory stage before the full onslaught of an offensive. A military cadres conference held in Hanoi on 27 April, presided over by Ton Duc Thang, Le Duan, Van Tien Dung and Song Hao described the revolutionary offensive to 'fulfil all missions' entrusted by the Party, State and the people 'no matter what the circumstance'.[111] The 'new situation' was endorsed by Quan Doi Nhan Dan the following day when it said the 'entire army' had 'surged forward', determined to lead the national revolution to 'final victory'.[112]

In Cambodia too the first quarter of 1974 witnessed some ominous trends. By this time the Party's domination of the apparatus of FUNK was almost complete. The Khmer Rouge's growing strength was also causing greater strain in its relation-

ship with Hanoi and differences with Vietnam were addressed for the first time in late 1973 by the CPK.[113] Nor were Hanoi's attempts to create a Khmer equivalent of the VWP by the end of 1973 welcome.[114] The 'internecine antagonisms' that subsequently erupted saw Khmer Rouge militias 'fighting one another'.[115]

Pol Pot's accession to the twin posts of Party Secretary and Chairman of the Party Military Committee 'at least in 1973' could have contributed to a hardening of policy.[116] Early in 1974 defections by Hanoi-trained Khmer veterans to the Lon Nol regime confirmed that the Vietnamese had left the area after the Paris Agreement. By 1974 the killings had become so widespread that personnel changes had to be made in all zones. Simultaneously a policy that 'Sihanouk must be put aside' surfaced in February-March 1974.[117]

By 1974 preparations were also made for imminent victory - a long-standing plan in favour of the evacuation of Phnom Penh - had been made. Hou Youn, according to Kiernan was opposed to evacuation but Khieu Samphan was in favour of it since the plan was to 'dry up the people from the enemy'.[118] To seek Hanoi's ostensible support of its policies, Pol Pot sent Le Duc Tho a letter dated 4 March 1974 underlining the Khmer Rouge's allegiance to Hanoi 'under whatever circumstances'.[119]

In an initiative aimed probably at more pressing military issues, Khieu Samphan at the end of March visited Hanoi and Peking in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief of the

CPNLAF. It is significant that prior to his visit AKI on 22 March stressed that any suggestion of North Vietnamese-Viet Cong assistance within the ranks of the CPNLAF was a 'blatant slander' since the latter had waged a 'people's war' from the 'very beginning' without reliance from any foreign country.[120] In Hanoi (28 March-1 April) Truong Chinh's speech of welcome on 29 March paid tribute to the Cambodian revolution growing 'more powerful than ever before' but hinted that 'no insidious scheme' could prevent the Vietnamese people from fulfilling their 'internationalist duty' to the Cambodian people since the peoples of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos would 'together' win complete victory.[121] Khieu Samphan was determined however to chart the Khmer Rouge's own course and stressed its autonomy because of international recognition and the 'military, political and diplomatic' victories including the support of some 60 countries. We might note that the TASS statement of 31 March came between Khieu Samphan's Hanoi and Peking visits.

In contrast his visit to Peking (1-4 April) indicated that the Chinese now preferred to improve their standing with the insurgent leaders as Khieu Samphan was accorded the honours due to a head of state. Whereas the prince had previously commanded Zhou Enlai's support - as late as 28 February 1974 the premier had suggested to Sihanouk that a compromise be reached with Lon Nol[122] - by April the increased influence of the swing in favour of the radicals already had

an impact on Peking's Cambodia policy. On 1 April Zhou acknowledged Khieu Samphan's position in his speech of welcome as endorsing the Cambodian people's 'just cause' which also enjoyed 'abundant support' as their 'sole legal government', terms of reference previously reserved for the prince.[123] Khmer Rouge dominance of the resistance was officially acknowledged on 2 April by Mao's meeting with Khieu Samphan,a move which put him on par with Sihanouk.[124]

The reverses in Vietnam and Cambodia which constituted a threat to the potential stability of the Indochinese peninsula were recognised. An exacerbated effort in the second quarter of 1974 to prolong the existence of South Vietnam attempted, to forestall further destabilisation.

VI : IV

JAPAN'S CONTINUING STRATEGY

APRIL - AUGUST 1974

One last attempt was made to shore up the Thieu regime. The survival of South Vietnam, a major part of Nixon and Kissinger's strategy involving the bolstering of its stability and viability, was given a boost midyear.

Aid to Indochina, Nixon said on 24 April, was an 'area of acute and continuing concern'. In a statement to Congress he requested the appropriation of US$939.8 million to assist South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos 'to shift their economies from war to peace' and to accelerate the reconstitution of their societies.[125] This 'modest increase' would now permit the development of viable, self-supporting economies with lower requirements for assistance within a few years. The challenges South Vietnam faced 'this year and next' included the need to meet the much higher costs of 'critical resources' caused by worldwide inflation as well as support for the military forces. The country had sharply reduced the consumption of imports, especially petroleum, but it could not reconstruct its economy 'alone'.

The Administration appeared at the same time to be running into difficulties on its proposed military aid programmes for South Vietnam. The House Armed Services Committee

voted on 4 April to cut the US$1.6 billion ceiling requested by the Administration to US$1.4 billion and further reductions seemed likely in the Senate.[126] In May 1974 the proposed accounting procedure that would allow the Defence Department to give South Vietnam US$266 million more in military aid was again questioned in Washington. The General Accounting Office (GAO), the watchdog of Congress, raised questions on 5 May about its legality: particularly whether the accounting change would not put the Defence Department in the position of violating a spending ceiling in an earlier fiscal year.[127] Senator Kennedy used the GAO arguments in the event and the vote on 7 May on the Kennedy Amendment was 43:38, a serious setback to US foreign policy.[128] The Defence Department would be held in the current fiscal year to the US$1,126 billion ceiling on military aid to South Vietnam and additional funds for this would be prevented.

The situation was compounded by a 'discovery' revealed on 8 May that the Defence Department had been building a US$1 billion stockpile of weapons for South Korea, South Vietnam and Thailand. This stockpile, the Pentagon argued, did not constitute a 'hidden programme' and was listed under 'support for other nations' totalling US$2.2 billion in the new budget under which military aid for South Vietnam was provided.[129]

Two Congressional missions had been dispatched to South Vietnam in 1974 to undertake reviews of current conditions in

Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos as they related to policies and programmes of economic and military assistance. The report dated 25 July 1974 by one mission (15 April-10 May) sent by the House Foreign Affairs Committee stressed that US aid be 'continued at present or increased levels' as long as the 'current level of hostilities' continued in the South.[130] If hostilities did not increase, the Saigon Government could devote more resources to reconstruction and development to improve its chances of 'winning' this phase of the war.

The political position of the RVN had been 'strengthened', it added, since the ceasefire as a result of political support and economic and military assistance provided by the US. It was 'unlikely' that North Vietnam could win a military victory. An economic spurt must therefore be related to the security situation which would require that hostilities be considerably reduced from current levels. Among the report's conclusions was that a 'reasonable amount of economic recovery and growth' be funded in Vietnam for substantially less than was being requested for fiscal 75. The Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) might guarantee some US private investment in South Vietnam but with a ceiling on individual investments.

Success, the report continued, now depended on external assistance and economic self-sufficiency for South Vietnam. Optimism based on the discovery of oil there however was 'highly speculative'. Even if oil was found, at least 'five years' could elapse before petroleum exports became a significant foreign exchange earner.

The key issue by mid-1974 was whether the Administration's economic aid request of US$750 million for fiscal 75 would accomplish Ambassador Martin's predicted 'takeoff' by the South Vietnamese economy and eventual US extrication. A report dated 5 August 1974 by the other mission to Indochina undertaken by Richard Moose and Charles Meissner (12 May-4 June 1974) for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee criticised the US Embassy in Saigon for 'adhering too closely' to the official line of the Saigon Government.[131]

It was difficult to reach any other conclusion that the fiscal 75 programmes were a continuation of past aid strategy supporting the Vietnamese economy with massive flows of outside resources in order to fill fiscal and trade deficits. Unless the 'big powers' applied strong pressure, the South Vietnamese Government and the communists would fail to reach political settlement. The present military confrontation seemed 'likely to continue' with the South Vietnamese 'unable to expel' the North Vietnamese from the South and the communists unable to acquire the 'decisive edge' required to defeat the South militarily.

To sustain South Vietnam's survival, the option of aid, reconstruction and investment, exemplified by the continuing Japanese role in 'buying off' Hanoi from further interest in attacking the South, was resurrected.

Against previous expectations, Japan in mid-1974 continued to carve an economically viable role in South Vietnam. On 23 April a private survey group led by the Japan Industrial Location Centre was described in Saigon as having 'recently completed' its basic surveys for the construction of a largescale petrochemical industrial complex along Cam Ranh Bay.[132] The entire bay area was potentially visualised by the Cam Ranh Industrial Development Survey Mission to be the 'only largescale chemical industrial complex' in Southeast Asia to include a petrochemical complex, port facilities, forestry and agricultural development. To make a large contribution to the economic future of Vietnam 'after the advent of peace', the planned development was targeted at 1980.[133]

In the interim Marine Oil of Japan was described on 17 May as 'most likely' to participate in the international bidding of the Mekong Delta.[134] Although the mining areas were smaller in scale than those offered in July 1973, the low sulphur content and proximity to Japan of the mining areas made the bidding attractive. A fortnight later, four groups, mostly American, including Mobil, obtained petroleum concessions on nine blocks on the Vietnamese continental shelf.[135] The signature bonus to be paid by the winning companies to the Saigon Government would total almost 35 millon Vietnamese piastres, double the amount of the first phase.

The overtures made by Saigon in January towards Tokyo

were revived. Newly-arrived South Vietnamese Ambassador to Japan, Nguyen Trieu Dan said on 29 May that Saigon would welcome investments by Japanese private investors and enterprises.[136] Joint venture projects with limited capital were singled out to realise quick profits. Dan also referred to a survey that was being conducted about the conditions under which the RVN could develop and export oil from the Mekong Delta.

In this connection the South Vietnamese Minister of Commerce and Industry, Nguyen Duc Cuong on 4 June announced that oil exploration had reached a point to warrant drilling the 'first three wells' before the end of the year.[137] Saigon was said to have collected over US$50 million as signature bonus in 1973 with US$130 million invested in oil exploration and a further US$700,000 reserved for personnel training. Although the presence of oil could not be ascertained until drilling actually began, an oil refinery could be built during the 2 to 3 years of exploration.

Japan's interests in South Vietnam were paralleled by what appeared in the North to be an element of competition between Japan and the Soviet Union. The General Geology Department Department revealed on 24 April that Hanoi's first exploratory step towards oil drilling was made in the context of Soviet interests in the Tonkin Gulf where 4 rigs had been erected for the drilling of some 5,000 m of explora-

tory boreholes.[138] A Soviet economic delegation including geologists had been described at the time as visiting the DRV before leaving on 26 April for Laos.[139]

After the deadlock in Japan-DRV relations during the first quarter of 1974, it was disclosed on 1 May that four North Vietnamese officials would make a one-week visit to Japan mid-month at the invitation of an all-party Dietmen's group. This proposal might be seen in the light of a revision of Japan's Southeast Asian policy, proposed in Tokyo on 2 May 1974 and said to have been prompted by Tanaka himself.[140] Assailed by anti-Japanese demonstrators during his recent Southeast Asian tour at the beginning of the year, Tanaka had apparently urged that a new policy be drawn up by the Foreign and Finance Ministries and MITI to lay 'major emphasis' on Tokyo's 'qualititative improvement' of economic cooperation with Southeast Asia.

But issues that blocked Tokyo-Hanoi relations remained outstanding. The Tokyo visit (17-23 May) of Tran Danh Tuyen, Minister of Materials might have urged Japan to take the lead to 'remove obstacles' to the exchange of ambassadors between the two countries; yet Hanoi's conditions for the 'complete normalisation' of relations still demanded the recognition of the PRG and reparations.[141]

Other exchanges seemed promising. The Hanoi visit of a group of Japanese scientists (25 May-1 June) resulted in the

signature of a Japan-North Vietnam Cooperation Agreement with the Japan Institute for Scientific and Technical Exchange; The idea of Memorandum Trade surfaced again with the disclosure that the Japan-Vietnam Trading Association had plans to have an office established in Hanoi on a permanent basis.[142] On 30 May a report in the Japanese press expressed confidence that Toyo Oil might constitute 'the main force' in oil development of the Tonkin Gulf despite what seemed to be suspension of the project.[143]

These developments might be understood against events in Washington which appeared intent on isolating North Viet -nam. The House of Representatives approved on 3 June a 'sense of Congress' resolution stating that the US should provide no aid, trade or diplomatic recognition to North Vietnam until it 'cooperated fully' in accounting for those missing in action (MIA's).[144] Kissinger continued on 4 and 7 June to lobby for foreign assistance to South Vietnam: placing these programmes within the context of America's 'larger foreign policy purposes' and the global situation on which it must pursue its national interests.[145] Progress made in a concerted international effort to propel the present equilibrium in Vietnam towards its resolution was 'only a beginning' and would be sacrificed if the US failed to persevere. The US, Kissinger emphasised, could not 'alone persevere' in the face

of continuing obstacles to peace: The strong participation of the US 'together with other nations' and the assistance programmes were 'crucial vehicles' for this exercise. Failure to sustain these would have a 'corrosive effect' on interests 'beyond its confines'.[146]

US objectives in economic assistance were aimed, by stimulating reconstruction and development, at a 'self-sustaining' South Vietnamese economy. Washington sought only to provide its ally with the minimum required in military assistance to deter a renewed North Vietnamese offensive. The achievements of recent years, Kissinger warned, might hinge on sums that were small in proportion to the total effort that had been made. Hence the Administration's request for US$750 million.[147]

Thieu had warned in the interim on 6 June that unless the US shoulder its responsibilities, Saigon would be at the point of surrender to the communists. The RVN had suffered a loss in the economic field because the 'present international background' differed from that in the past.[148] Faced with 'internal difficulties' its US ally had been forced to adapt its present policy 'without any alternative'. Economic aid from France and Japan, the only weapon with which Saigon could build up its economy, was 'only symbolic and negligible'.

By mid-June moves in Washington were to have a direct impact on Japan's stabilising initiatives in Vietnam. The US-Japan dialogue was given a boost in an announcement by Nix-

on in Salzburg on 11 June nominating Robert Ingersoll to the post of Deputy Secretary of State.[149] In a position second only to Kissinger, Ingersoll would replace Kenneth Rush who had recently become an advisor on economic policy to Nixon.

On 13 June Ingersoll referred to the two major goals of US policy defined in the Nixon Doctrine on East Asia as the 'reduction of tension' among the major powers involved in the region and a condition of 'peaceful evolutionary development' among smaller nations in which they were to 'provide increasingly' for their own economic and defence needs.[150] In his accompanying request for economic and security assistance funds to East Asia for fiscal 75, Ingersoll repeated Kissinger's arguments advanced a week earlier. South Vietnam, he said, was in a deepening economic crisis 'not of its own making'. The crisis, perpetuated by continued North Vietnamese military build-up, was exacerbated by the sharp decline in real terms of the value of US economic assistance and by the impact of US troop withdrawals. The RVN, he said, must look 'to others' for the wherewithal to reverse this economic deterioration and begin the reconstruction and development efforts necessary for movement toward economic viability and self-sufficiency. The country, Ingersoll added, was 'stronger militarily and politically' than ever before and had 'excellent longrange prospects' for economic self-sufficiency. Good prospects of 'major oil discoveries' gave it the poss-ibility of an economic takeoff comparable to that of South Korea and Taiwan.[151]

These remarks might be examined against Kissinger's reference on 18-19 June to the need to give Japan a sense of belonging to a structure 'larger than itself'.[152] The appointment at the same time of James Hodgson on 18 June as the new US Ambassador to Japan finally dispelled the prevailing uncertainty over the Administration's commitment to Tokyo.

These developments appeared to exert some influence on Japan's proposed economic cooperation in the second half of 1974 with both North and South Vietnam. The Japanese Construction Industry was reported on 27 June to be conducting surveys from a 'post-Vietnam perspective'.[153] In South Vietnam, the 'Mekong Project' was to be revived by the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) with economic and technical cooperation of Japan; a team would be dispatched in the spring of 1975 to establish contacts and conduct arrangements. On 11 July five Japanese trading companies including Ito-Chu, Mitsui-Bussan and Sumitomo, were awarded contracts by the Saigon government for supplying housing materials for the reconstruction of South Vietnam.[154] This was part of the non-reimbursable aid amounting to a total of Yen 13 billion based on an official note exchanged in March between the Tokyo and Saigon governments. In Tokyo Nikkan Kogyo disclosed on 23 July that the Japanese Foreign Ministry was set to reexamine and redefine economic aid to developing countries when compiling the next fiscal year's budget.[155] Aid considered henceforth would be categorised between those develop-

ing countries with resources 'such as oil' and those without. A plan for South Vietnam's rehabilitation and development was released on 31 July by the Overseas Construction Cooperation Association (OCCA).[156] Based on the Lillienthal report by the former Tennesse Valley Authority (TVA) and an earlier Four-Year Plan (1973-76) by both the US and the RVN Governments, the objectives for the Mekong Project included: Japanese economic aid to South Vietnam, the expansion of Can Tho, Saigon and Danang power stations, the restoration of bridges and the construction of a dam. News reports on 2 August said that Japan had decided to extend US$35 million to the three Indochinese countries as emergency non-reimbursable grants from its 1974 budget of which US$25 million would be allocated to South Vietnam alone.[157] Interest in establishing a Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry was expressed on 8 August by some 30 Japanese enterprises in Saigon to 'promote investments in an orderly manner'.[158]

Japan's moves apart, South Vietnam was itself intent on bolstering its own economic viability and survival. The Exec-utive Director of the National Petroleum Commission, Tran Van Khoi, on 23 June saw oil as the 'light at the end of the tunnel'.[159] Efforts had been intensified in the interim towards the legitimation of its petroleum reserves in view of the imminent convening of the Third Law of the Sea Conference (20 June-29 August) in Caracas, Venezuela. The conference hoped to produce a draft treaty to establish limits and zones

of control of resources on the continental shelf off some 140 countries. Both North and South Vietnam had been invited; Hanoi refused to attend as the PRG was not invited and only Saigon was represented.

In his statement to the conference on 25 June 1974, Foreign Minister Vuong Van Bac declared unequivocally that the RVN was the 'only delegation' to defend the 'legitimate rights' of the Vietnamese people.[160] Invoking its law dated 1 December 1970, the RVN, Bac said, was moving towards 'rational exploitation' of the natural resources of its adjacent seabeds to ascertain the possibility and location of mineral resources. Its biddings held in 1973 and 1974 had granted petroleum exploration and exploitation concessions within the continental shelf to companies of high technological capability. Castigating Hanoi for 'remaining silent' while the Chinese seized the Paracels, Bac reaffirmed the proclamation of 7 September 1967 and considered 'null and void' all concessions granted by 'any other country' which transgressed the RVN continental shelf.

Bac's statement might be understood in the context of the signature in Saigon on 27 June of exploration contracts by 11 firms.[161] The RVN was planning to begin prospecting within the next three months and could receive US$34 million in royalties.

More vital was Saigon's perception of events in Washington. It had become increasingly evident by early July 1974 that US military aid to South Vietnam would probably be limited by

Congressional budget cuts largely to ammunition, petroleum and spare parts.[162] The State and Defence Departments were reported to have discussed with the US Embassy in Saigon a sharp curtailment in planned military aid to South Vietnam for the fiscal year beginning 1 July 1974. Defence Department planners were assuming that Congress would authorise US $900 million to US$1 billion in military aid to the RVN which would 'just about' meet its requirements. On the basis of the current level of military activity nearly US$500 million had been budgeted for ammunition alone. The anticipated Congres -sional cuts would leave little for planned new equipment for the South Vietnamese forces: US$900 million was described as 'insufficient' to finance a one-for-one replacement of weapons losses by Saigon. In April Thieu had sent Cao Van Vien to the US to seek support for South Vietnam's aid request where the latter had been assured of support from the Defence Department.[163] In May Nguyen Tien Hung was sent to Washington to assess the economic and military situation and had unsuccessfully appealed on 15 May to Edward Kennedy.[164]

According to Vien, the much-reduced appropriation for fiscal 75 only met 'half' of Saigon's austere requirements. After a deduction of US$46 million for USDAO (Defence Attache Office) operations there remained US$654 million for direct support.[165] In view of these meagre aid funds, the air force was compelled to inactivate aircraft and reduce operations, helilift was down 70% affecting troop reinforce-

ment and supply, regular airlift was down 50% affecting the mobility of general reserve units, naval activities were reduced by half and river activities by 72%. As a result, 'not a single plane, ship or boat was replaced after the cease -fire' Vien said and only 70% of the most critical ammunition could be replaced. After austerity measures were taken in 1974 the consumption of diesel fuel and gasoline decreased 30% as compared with 1973. Without supplemental aid the RVN's armed forces, Vien warned, would run out of fuel by mid-May 1975.[166] Already the monthly consumption rate for the first eight months of fiscal 1975 (July 1974-February 1975) amounted to only 27% of the preceasefire rate. No replacements would be possible for fiscal 1975 because most of the budget was needed for operational and maintenance requirements 'more essential' to the war effort.[167]

This desperate situation explains why oil production was correspondingly accelerated.Saigon announced on 5 August that the Kaiyo Oil Co and Mobil Oil Corporation would 'short -ly' conduct seismic tests to tap oil deposits in two new concessions off the coast of South Vietnam.[168] Kaiyo Oil report -ed on 18 August that it would confirm the existence of petroleum gas after the results of the analysis were clarified; the first trial drilling was expected to be carried out in October 1974 and in the spring of 1975.[169] The first oil drilling opera

-tion on the continental shelf would begin on 17 August on Con Son Island, with a semi-floating rig of the Pecten Vietnam Co., a subsidiary of Shell.[170] A press statement issued on 25 August by RVN Minister of Commerce and Industry Nguyen Duc Cuong affirmed that a layer of 'oil-bearing rock' 1,400 m below the seabed had been struck to contain 'medium crude' oil of good quality which was being checked for 'commercial exploitation'.[171] Although Cuong hoped the discovery would encourage foreign investment, Tran Van Khoi of the National Petroleum Commission expressed caution since it would take several years before production could begin and the volume was likely to be considerably smaller than that in the Middle East.[172]

In the interim South Vietnam had expected the Law of the Sea Conference in Caracas, ending on 29 August, to produce the framework of a new world treaty to deal with fishing and navigational rights, the ownership and sharing of oil, gas and mineral resources in coastal waters and ocean pollution. The absence of clearcut measures apparently led to compromise at ministerial level to control exploitation of the seas between rich and poor nations.[173]

But it was too late.

In the interim developments in Washington had reached an impasse. Testifying desperately on 24 July 1974 before the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations of the Senate Approp-

riations Committee, Kissinger again emphasised the 'urgent and fundamental importance' of the foreign assistance programme to the entire range of US foreign policy concerns.[174] A six-year projection, he revealed, reflecting expectation of a gradually declining US role in Indochina had been submitted to Congress. The present request of US$750 million in assistance to the RVN was thus essential to make this transition.

Ambassador Graham Martin in his testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 25 July argued that if the 'full amount' of economic assistance was appropriated by Congress, 'in a very few years' the US would be able to regard its Vietnam involvement as closed.[175] The RVN would be left 'economically viable', militarily capable of defending itself with its own manpower against both external aggression and externally supported internal subversion. If the requested level was not forthcoming, he warned that it would take the US 'longer' to achieve that goal. The appropriate level of economic aid to South Vietnam for fiscal 1975, Martin said was 'three-fourths the amou -nt of economic aid furnished this year to North Vietnam by China and the Soviet bloc.

The Saigon Administration he believed, could continue to handle the military threat 'on their own' provided the US continued to replace military supplies on the permitted one-to-one basis. 'New aid' he stressed, would be channelled 'more than ever before' into development and investment projects. Although the past decade had seen US assistance

concentrating on a stabilisation effort, greater emphasis for 1975 and 1976 would be placed on longrange reconstruction and development programmes. The RVN would need no more than 'nominal amounts' of US aid by the end of the decade if the amount of assistance envisaged by Kissinger was provided.

The last week of July had also seen Thieu in desperation, dispatch Nguyen Tien Hung to Washington to review the economic situation and to expedite the shipment of F-5E aircraft. Hung had worked with AID to seek additional funds for 1974 imports and reconstruction.[176] The campaign to impeach Nixon was however gathering steam; Congress had 'no time or inclination to deal with any other issue, let alone aid for ~~for~~ South Vietnam'. There was no aid vote for Vietnam and the money came from a continuous resolution from the previous year's level of US$395 million. Robert McNamara, President of the World Bank was 'non-committal' when approached and expressed difficulties to get Congress to increase funds for the Bank and the AID.[177]

More forebodings laid ahead. On 5 August Nixon signed a US$22.2 billion military procurement bill that authorised US $1 billion in military assistance to South Vietnam for fiscal 75. On 6 August the House of Representatives reduced military aid to South Vietnam by a vote of 233:157 to US$700 million, down US$300 million from the US$1 billion requested by the House Appropriation Committee.[178] The original Pen-

tagon request had been US$1.6 billion.

By this time the trauma of Watergate which had escalated throughout the summer of 1974 demanded no less than Nixon resign.[179] He was replaced by Gerald Ford on 9 August 1974 who indicated that the foreign policy machinery would be kept intact; Kissinger would remain Secretary of State while retaining his other role as National Security Adviser. Appearing before Congress on 12 August, Ford indicated that he would work to avoid a military takeover of South Vietnam and direct US military involvement and was ready to strive for a restoration of Con -gressional cuts in military aid and would convince the Senate to restore the cut by the House.[180]

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee however voted on 13 August to cut the Nixon Administration's economic aid request for Indochina from US$940 million to about US$550 million. In the process aid to Saigon was reduced from US$750 million to US$420 million.[181] Congress also put language in the bill to place an overall ceiling of US$1.28 billion on all aid to South Vietnam and lowered the restriction on American civilians working there from 5,200 to 3,000. It called on the Ford Administration to urge China and the Soviet Union to reduce military aid to all parties in Indochina to restore the ceasefire agreement. Kissinger's reaction quoted at the time raised fears that Hanoi might use the period of transition in Washington to test American resolve. And he was right.

In B-2 COSVN and the Regional Military Party Commission were evaluating the 'changed situation'. The July 1974 COSVN conference, according to Tran Van Tra, emphasised 'winning a decisive victory' in 1975-76 'in keeping with COSVN Resolution 21'.[182] By this time the disaffection between B-2 and the General Staff, expressed in mid-May 1973 had been resolved. The Regional Command now officially decreed the formation of the corps for B-2 as a 'positive preparatory step' to meet the demands of the situation. The resolution also gave specific guidance to the battlefields to 'take advantage of time to strengthen forces, material resources' and to ensure that the Mekong Delta underwent a 'clear transformation' in their favour.[183] We now know that on 20 July 1974 the 4th Quan Doan consisting of fighting units was formed in eastern Nam-Bo.[184]

The result of these manoeuvres was probably the beginning of a 'test of strength' by the PAVN. A sudden spurt of fighting on 18 July with the opening of a PAVN offensive on an area south of Danang, South Vietnam's second city, resulted in the 'heaviest 24-hour period' of fighting in South Vietnam since the signature of the Paris Agreement.[185] The campaign seemed to be preparing a drive throughout the last half of July against Duc-Duc,Thuong-Duc, Que-Son, Quang Ngai and Nghia Hanh to be closer to Danang and be within striking distance of Route 1, the vital North-South link that ran the length of the country. Simultaneously in the south, the communists opened up the Ben Cat front to move closer to the capital and threaten Route 13. In retrospect

these were moves preliminary to any firmer military decisions to be taken later on in October 1974 and in January 1975.[186]

The war had entered its final phase. With reference to a plan to liberate the South, Le Duan on 21 July 1974 observed that the 'present opportunity is the most favourable' as any delay could make it 'very complicated'.[187] A directive of the politburo and the Military Commission of the Party Central Committee accordingly instructed the General Staff to make 'all-round preparations' for that strategic plan.

Closer ties with the Soviet bloc were also evident from mid-July. In a commentary on Indochina during the visit of Hoang Quoc Viet, Chairman of the Vietnam Federation of Trade Unions, Moscow on 14 July said the US-Soviet summit (27 June -2 July) was bound to promote a 'lasting peace' and a 'just solution' to the problems of South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.[188] As a result of the summit, the 'forces of aggression and reaction' which had obstructed the realisation of peace and national concord in Indochina aimed at rekindling war in the region had become 'increasingly isolated'.

Almost immediately afterwards Le Thanh Nghi, politburo member and Chairman of the State Planning Commission, together with its Vice-Chairman, Le Khac, embarked on a visit to Bulgaria (9-13 July), East Germany (13-17 July), Hungary (17-20 July) and the Soviet Union (20-31 July) in search of an 'expansion of bilateral economic cooperation, the implementation of economic agreements and the coordination of

plans for the next Five-Year Plan'. Attempts were made during Nghi's Moscow visit to expand 'solid friendship and fraternal cooperation' with a meeting of the Soviet-Vietnamese Commission of Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation held on 22 July.[189] Soviet aid to Vietnam in 1975 as well as the 'expansion of economic relations and trade' covering 1976-80 were discussed.

With reference to the Soviets and the Chinese, Ambassador Martin believed that they concluded in the 'early months of the summer of 1974' and certainly acted on this in the autumn after the departure of Nixon, that the effectiveness of the propaganda campaign being waged in Congress to reduce or eliminate appropriations to South Vietnam would make US support of South Vietnam increasingly ineffective.[190] They also made the 'calculated decision' that if the US was going to let South Vietnam 'go by default', they were likely to be credited by the North Vietnamese for having assisted them in this. Supplies to Hanoi, Martin continued, thus took on astronomical proportions.

We know know that in August and September 1974, the Regional Staff, according to Tran Van Tra, drafted an operational plan for the 1974-75 dry season that foresaw the winning of a decisive victory within the 'next few years'.[191]

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EPILOGUE

The resignation of Richard Nixon and the political and military consequences in Vietnam and Cambodia arising as a direct result of the erosion of executive authority in the US, have been the subject of much comprehensive study elsewhere. The focus of much of the writing has been on the 'final collapse' of Phnom Penh and Saigon in April 1975.

To bring this study to a close however the economic dimension of the Paris Agreement, particularly the continuing Japanese role so central to it in Vietnam, needsto be examined right up to the fall of Saigon on 30 April 1975.

In America Nixon's resignation saw any last will to fight the war go with him. To assure Thieu of continuity in US foreign policy, Ford in a letter of 9 August 1974 stressed its 'essential bipartisan nature'.[1] US aid and 'increasing aid' from other donor countries, he promised, would be rapidly and effectively utilised to bring the South Vietnamese economy to a 'self-sustaining level' in the next few years.

By early September however the effects of reduced Amer--ican aid to South Vietnam were being felt. With no ammunition to waste, isolated outposts were being abandoned and a real change in military strategy had to be made. Thieu therefore requested to meet personally with Ford but received no reply. To make his case, Foreign Minister Vuong Van Bac was dispatched to Washington with a letter dated 19 September

1974.[2] Ford avoided making any specific commitment at the time other than general expressions of continued support in a 'partnership' with South Vietnam.

This was later expressed in Deputy Secretary of Defence, William Clements' visit to Saigon in early October which revealed that the reduced level of military aid approved by Congress had left the RVN with a 'strictly get-by situation'. In the event of a North Vietnamese offensive, the 'option' of a return of US air and naval forces would 'have to be considered'.[3] His return to Washington resulted in a 'strong possibility', emerging on 8 October, that the Ford Administration might ask Congress early in 1975 for additional mili--tary aid for South Vietnam.[4]

Approving a defence bill, on 9 October Ford affirmed that it might be necessary to approach Congress 'early next year' to work out some solutions to meet critical needs which could arise in South Vietnam.[5] On 24 October 1974 Ford wrote secretly to Thieu assuring him that there had been no change in US policy towards Vietnam and that his administration would make every effort to provide assistance needed.[6]

Saigon had turned in the interim to Japan. On 21 September Deputy Premier Tran Van Don, in charge of national development programmes, left for Tokyo to discuss aid with the Japanese government.[7] Commenting on the event, Liberation Radio accused

the US of now trying to get 'other countries' to invest in South Vietnam to alleviate its own economic burden there.[8]

The change in the US Presidency had no effect however on the Japanese commitment to stabilising Vietnam. A Japanese Chamber of Commerce was established in Saigon on 9 September and the visit of a seven-member government delegation, led by Omori Seiichi, Deputy Director-General for Asian Affairs at the Foreign Ministry began the same day.[9] The purpose of the visit was to make surveys of possible Japanese emergency non-reimbursable aid.

Japan's latent moves also included North Vietnam. The Overseas Construction Cooperation Association (OCCA) was reported on 27 June to have started preparations for the exchange of technology with North Vietnam as part of its operational plan for the current fiscal year.[10] Tokyo's financial circles also expressed interest in Hanoi. One unprecedented development was Mitsui Bank's intention on 28 June to contact Hanoi at the beginning of July for an exchange of opinion with the Vietnam Foreign Trade Bank.[11] The first Japanese bank to establish corresponding relations with its Hanoi counterpart, Mitsui Bank had apparently concluded its contract in 1961: It revealed that its share of foreign exchange transactions between Japan and the DRV was approximately 50%. On 1 July Sanwa Bank disclosed that it had in fact proposed direct negotiations with the Vietnam Foreign Trade Bank 'even before the signature of the Paris Agreement' and had 'recently' received an invi-

tation to visit Hanoi at the end of July.[12] Both banks had projects for the postwar reconstruction of Vietnam.

Where diplomacy was concerned, Tokyo had earlier announ-ced that Japan would send three officials, two of whom were from its embassy in Vientiane, to Hanoi on 24 August 1974 for talks on the establishment of a Japanese Embassy there 'by the end of the year'.[13] First Secretary Imagawa Yukio was scheduled to be appointed Chargé d'Affaires in Hanoi when the embassy opened.[14] In the event these talks remained deadlocked over the question of Japanese recognition of the PRG and Hanoi's demand of reparations from Tokyo.[15] But at the end of September two members of the Viet Cong were permitted entry into Japan, to attend the 20th anniversary of the Japan-North Vietnam Friendship Association.[16]

Tokyo and Hanoi observed the first anniversary of diplomatic relations with slim chances of exchanging ambassadors. The lack of progress here might be linked to events elsewhere. On 4 September, new US Ambassador to Japan, James Hodgson, advocated the continuation of a close US-Japan partnership in Asia for the easing of tension. To 'stabilise' the international political and economic environment, both countries, he said, should share the responsibility for solv-ing resources and energy as well as international trade and currency problems.[17] In New York, the US-Japan talks of 27 September 1974, the first to be held since Kimura Toshio

assumed the post of Foreign Minister in July, also endorsed this principle. At the UN General Assembly too, Kissinger, Ingersoll and Kimura seemed intent on avoiding 'any confrontation whatsoever in reconstructing the international economic order'.[18]

The effects of the energy crisis continued unabated in the industrialised democracies. Aid to developing countries were henceforth more likely to be channelled through international organs. In early September ADB President Inoue Shiro said the oil deficits suffered by advanced nations would curtail their ability to supply aid.[19] The sharply worsening international capital market also meant that aid organs would have difficulties procuring funds. The IMF and World Bank General Meeting held in Washington (30 September-4 October) saw Ohira, now Finance Minister, concurring that oil, inflation and aid to developing countries were now issues of global concern.[20]

These problems notwithstanding, an attempt was made in mid-October 1974 to resurrect the aid consortium arrangement for Indochina. Hanoi denounced it on 14 October as a 'last--ditch attempt' to provide multilateral aid to Saigon. The USA, it said, was 'pressing the World Bank and a number of other countries' to hold a conference in Paris to carry out the 'so-called' plan for multilateral aid to the Thieu administration under the guise of humanitarian aid.[21]

The second preparatory conference held in Paris in Octo-

ber ended however without any agreement. As in mid-March 1974, the Scandinavian countries, Norway, Sweden and Denmark were insistent that no aid be given to 'despotic regimes'.[22] The advanced nations thus decided to form an aid 'consultative group' for each of the four Indochinese countries, beginning with Laos where the situation appeared the least complex. An informal meeting was scheduled for Paris in January 1975, to be attended by representatives from some 15 nations. The World Bank was expected to present a report on the situation in Laos on which consultations would be held on how to push aid there. Japan had already extended aid for the construction of the Nam Gum Dam in Laos and to the Foreign Exchange Stabilisation Fund for the stabilisation of the Lao currency. Following the Lao example, a consultative group would be formed for South Vietnam in which Japan was expected to make a greater contribution in view of the dwindling aid from the US. North Vietnam, despite its protests, was being appeased by promised offers of Japanese aid on a bilateral basis. But this could not be effected without the establishment of the Japanese Embassy in Hanoi.[23] Although 'special missions' from both Saigon and Hanoi were expected in Paris in November to discuss details of aid from France - which had previously given aid amounting to US$20 million for each country - neither had worked out precise requests for aid priorities.[24]

We now know that the Keidanren sent its Standing Director, Senga Tetsuya, to Hanoi in October 1974 to hold talks

for the first time with government leaders including Dang Viet Chau, North Vietnamese Minister of Finance.[25] Senga, who visited South Vietnam at the beginning of 1973 (See p. 77), had been invited by the DRV Government, anxious to implement its Two-Year Reconstruction Plan for 1974-5 to be followed by its Five-Year Plan in 1976. The Keidanren, expecting to cooperate with North Vietnam in the economic development of heavy industry, had started in Japan 'adjustment operations with related industry circles' regarding the arrangements for the projects. Japan-DRV economic cooperation however was to be closely connected to the establishment of the Japanese Embassy in Hanoi and Senga would visit the DRV capital again in the spring of 1975 since this level of dialogue between two different systems was exceptional.[26]

Hanoi's exchanges with Tokyo continued in the interim. Dao Trung, Director-General of the VNA visited Tokyo (18-24 October) at the invitation of Kyodo; The Japanese Federation of Trade Unions, SOHYO, made plans to build a hall in Hon Gay as a token of friendship between Japanese and Vietnamese workers; and in mid-November the OCCA proposed to dispatch a mission to Hanoi in the spring of 1975 for construction activities.[27]

The uncertain situation in South Vietnam in November did not deter Hazama Gumi, Japan's construction industry, inaugurating its subsidiary there, Vietnam Hazama. It formulated at the same time a policy for the extension of techni-

cal cooperation with North Vietnam.[28] Japan's trade with North Vietnam in 1974 was reported at the end of the year to have reached almost three times the volume of 1973 and Hanoi was requesting the extension of long-term, low interest loans for exports through the deferred payment system.[29] By early January 1975 it appeared likely that Export-Import Bank loans to the DRV might be extended for the export of a fertiliser plant by Hitachi Shipbuilding.[30]

These moves might be seen against Ford's visit to Tokyo (18-22 November) which gave renewed emphasis to the US-Japan alliance. A 'common resolve' to encourage diplomatic and political rather than military solutions to world problems was urged.[31] The Joint Communique of 20 November 1974 said the discussions between Ford and Tanaka encouraged the development of conditions in the Asia Pacific to facilitate peaceful settlement of 'outstanding issues' by the parties most concerned, reduce international tensions, promote the sustained and orderly growth of developing countries and encourage constructive relationships among the countries of the area. Both countries would also 'intensify efforts' to promote close cooperation among the industrialised democracies while carrying out 'dialogue and exchanges' with countries of 'different social systems'.[32]

The resignation of Tanaka Kakuei on 26 November 1974 as a result of the Lockheed scandal saw the accession of Miki

Takeo as Premier; Miyazawa Kiichi became the new Foreign Minister. There was no apparent change however in Tokyo's interests in Vietnam. The visit to Saigon, at the invitation of the South Vietnamese government, of former Premier Kishi Nobusuke for talks (15-19 December) with Thieu and Premier Tran Thien Khiem, was a symbol of such continuity.[33]

But by year's end the military situation in South Vietnam had taken a turn for the worse: events in B-2 reached a decisive stage. At the 'beginning of October' 1974, Tran Van Tra later revealed, COSVN approved the operational plan drafted in August-September to 'unanimously' win a decisive victory and complete the national democratic revolution in 1975-6: 1975 would be the 'pivotal year' and the war would be 'victoriously concluded' in 1976.[34] Deputy Secretary of COSVN, Nguyen Van Linh said the Thieu regime was in a state of 'serious decline ... (as) our attacks are becoming increasingly strong'.[35] Moreover the Hanoi visit of General U. Kulikov, CGS of the Soviet Armed Forces (21-27 December) according to General Vo Nguyen Giap, encouraged the 'advance towards still bigger victories' in the 'new stage' of the revolution.[36]

The launching of the offensive early in 1975 appeared not to impose any constraints on Japanese initiatives in Vietnam. These were accelerated instead. But now Hanoi took centre-stage. The Foreign Ministry in Tokyo announced on 6 March that Japan would open an embassy in Hanoi on 1 April 1975. Imagawa Yukio, First Secretary at the Lao mission would go

to Hanoi in late March as Chargé d'Affaires.[37] The DRV would also consult Tokyo about the opening of its embassy there. The issue of war reparations was to be settled by a Japanese grant of Yen 5,000 million as an 'immediate step' towards future joint economic cooperation.

Other Japanese interests in North Vietnam were also making progress. A trade delegation from Sumitomo was reported on the same day to have concluded talks in Hanoi on finance and commercial banking.[38] In the first such exchange since mid-1974 an eight-member DRV economic delegation left Hanoi on 18 March for Tokyo: Tran Van Thanh, Head of the Foreign Ministry's Asian Bureau was expected to confer on details of the proposed Yen 5,000 million aid programme as non-reimbursable economic cooperation and to exchange views on 'other operational questions'.[39]

The fall of Ban Me Thuot on 13 March 1975 signalled the beginning of the end. The interval between this date and 4 April, which saw 'newly-liberated' areas added to one another in the South, deserves a closer examination. In Tokyo the Foreign Ministry expressed its anxiety in mid-March that the military situation could shake the very foundations of Japan's policy towards Indochina and force a re-evaluation of its reconstruction aid to both North and South Vietnam.[40] It might also postpone the mutual establishment of the Japanese and North Vietnamese embassies in the two capitals.

Japan grew increasingly concerned. The amount of its aid to South Vietnam in 1973 (Yen 5,000 million) had increased in 1974 to Yen 7,000 million. As late as 27 March 1975 the Cabinet approved another Yen 9,000 million for the RVN by diverting budgetary funds.[41] On 28 March letters were exchanged in Saigon between Japan and the RVN with strict emphasis that the amount be used solely for the 'stabilisation' of the people's livelihood.[42] For North Vietnam the Foreign Ministry simultaneously announced on 27 March that its non-reimbursable economic cooperation with Hanoi would not be settled until April in view of the worsening military situation in the South.[43] These moves suggested that it was unlikely that the Japanese Embassy in Hanoi could open on 1 April.

Developments were now critical. On 1 April at an Upper House Cabinet meeting, Foreign Minister Miyazawa said the only way to settle the Vietnam problem was a 'return to the starting point' of the Paris Agreement; 'outside forces' should refrain from extending any additional aid. But he was adamant about sending embassy staff to Hanoi 'within one or two weeks'.[44] Miyazawa's remarks might be understood against the disclosure within government circles on 2 April that if Japan opened its embassy in North Vietnam and exchanged ambassadors 'at an early date', Tokyo might help stabilise the situation in South Vietnam and provide channels for peace operations.[45] The rationale was that moves in Congress suggested opposition to renewed US military intervention.

And as the US did not have diplomatic relations with Hanoi, a peaceful solution, Tokyo reasoned, might be reached through China, the Soviet Union and North Vietnam. The opening of the Japanese Embassy in Hanoi might thus enable Tokyo to fulfil its role for the 'stabilisation' of Asia. The mission could probably open once the Nguyen Van Thanh mission, then still visiting Tokyo, had negotiated the Yen 5,000 million non-reimbursable aid. Two staff members including Imagawa, would then be sent to Hanoi 'around the middle of the month' to precede the exchange of ambassadors.

Where South Vietnam was concerned, on 4 April Tokyo would dispatch to Saigon, Nakayama Yoshihiro, former Ambassador to France and to South Vietnam, for a firsthand assessment of the situation there. He would return to Tokyo a week later to enable the Foreign Ministry to formulate a new policy towards Indochina. On the same day Hitomi Hiroshi was named Japan's new Ambassador to South Vietnam, to take up
46
his post on 10 April 1975.

However, by 4 April the Japan-DRV talks in Tokyo broke down. Foreign Minister Miyazawa candidly admitted that the agreement for economic aid had collapsed. A shift in Tokyo's relations with Vietnam was now discernable.

The Tokyo government decided on 5 April to donate a sum of Yen 600 million to the Indochina Operation Group (IOG) of the International Red Cross, for refugee relief. The IOG's activities covered the whole of Indochina and donations by

the Japanese Government would also be distributed to areas controlled by the PRG. A formal decision to this effect would be made at a Cabinet meeting on 8 April.[47] The date would coincide with the release, in Saigon, of an interim report from Nakayama, based on talks with Thieu and senior leaders, to lay the groundwork for Miyazawa's talks with Kissinger in Washington due on 10 April.[48]

Nakayama's report said Thieu was having a difficult time attempting to establish a new Cabinet and that there were no foundations for any optimism for the future. But the immediate situation in the South was still 'fluid' and Japan might expedite operations to increase contacts with the North: Imagawa Yukio, currently in Tokyo, would return to Laos by 10 April and then go to Hanoi 'within a week'.[49]

By now a turning point seemed to have been reached in Japanese policy on Vietnam. On 10 April 1975 Tokyo made an announcement to shelve 'for an indefinite period' the Yen 9,000 million loan to South Vietnam 'out of deference' to the DRV mission with whom talks had failed.[50] Miyazawa embarked on his Washington visit the same day. Ostensibly seeking a reaffirmation of the US commitment to defend Japan including a pledge to maintain the 'nuclear umbrella', the talks exposed the rift between the two allies with respect to events in Vietnam. Japan's attitude towards North Vietnam was said to provoke the 'sharpest confrontation' on 10 April

between Ingersoll and Miyazawa in Washington.[51]

The Washington talks were polarised by the US' desire, on the one hand, for more backing for Saigon, and Japan's commitment to dialogue with Hanoi, on the other, with a view to stabilising the situation in Vietnam as a whole. The US believed it still possible to prop up the Thieu regime militarily to defend the area it still held. But this presupposed Congressional support and aid in any case did not mean a halt to the PAVN advance. Japan's negotiations with Hanoi, the issue of non-reimbursable aid and the establishment of the embassy were taken as an affront to US policy. Tokyo's position had previously been seen as complementary to that of the US since it urged respect for the Paris Agreement and a settlement based on non-interference. Throughout the talks Japan continued nevertheless to urge cooperation with North Vietnam through dialogue and the setting up of the mission. To US charges that Hanoi was violating the Paris Agreement, the Japanese response was that the breakdown of the ICCS made it impossible to verify the parties responsible for violations on the ground.[52]

President Ford's 'State of the World' Address on 10 April 1975 affirmed the US position on the need for emergency military aid to South Vietnam. But Japan still questioned the credibility of the American commitment to Vietnam. The Kissinger-Miyazawa talks on 11 April reaffirmed the pledge to

maintain the US-Japan security structure, but the exchanges on Vietnam, expected to arouse bitter controversy, exposed the fundamental gap in the two allies' positions. The assessment of the Indochina problem remained unresolved.[53] Both sides apparently exercised restraint and avoided delving too deeply into the issue. No details were divulged.

In Tokyo 'Ambassador-at-large' Nakayama's return from Saigon on 11 April saw a thorough examination of the situation in South Vietnam. The military situation, he said at a press conference on 12 April, was 'extremely serious' but there was no immediate danger of an imminent collapse; Thieu though desperate, was confident about securing aid and remained unflinching in his allegiance to conserving the area the RVN still held.[54]

With what was perceived to be the inevitable demise of US influence in Asia, Miyazawa's return to Tokyo on 13 April from Washington saw the Foreign Ministry expressing the intention, US objections notwithstanding, to 'hasten its decision' on aid to both North and South Vietnam.[55] Some Yen 3 billion in emergency aid for refugees, the Foreign Minister said, would be extended to both the areas controlled by Saigon as well those under the PRG. Yen 600 million initially promised would be contributed to the IOG. Inner government circles were concerned that aid administered via the IOG might result in PRG areas receiving a larger share. Tokyo however braced itself for problems arising from US

objections to Japanese apportioning of the aid.

By mid-April Japan augmented what it called its 'go-it -alone' stance in its Asian diplomacy. Four days later, on 17 April 1975, Phnom Penh fell to the Khmer Rouge. Nothing daunted, the new Japanese Ambassador to Saigon, Hitomi Hiroshi, presented his credentials on 18 April to Thieu.[56]

The naming of a new Japanese Ambassador to the RVN at this late stage raises questions. Did the the Japanese imagine that there might be a steady transition towards a genuine PRG Government, and that Tokyo would be in a position to recognise it promptly and transfer to it arrangements previously made with Thieu? On 21 April however Tokyo decided to postpone the Yen 9 billion it had earlier agreed to extend to Saigon since the 'sudden development' of the situation there made it difficult for Japan to fulfil its promise.[57] President Thieu of the RVN resigned the same day.

Nguyen Van Thieu himself had been bent on survival. In Saigon the aftermath of Nixon's resignation and the events surrounding Vietnam compounded Thieu's dilemma; the idea of 'truncating South Vietnam' reemerged as a possibility.[58] In the spring of 1975 this resulted in a strategic withdrawal from the two northern regions of South Vietnam to bring the forces back to shorter, more easily defensible perimeters, including Saigon and the 'rice bowl' of the Mekong Delta.

The cutback in US aid funds forced Thieu to reduce the territory of South Vietnam to cede the central half to North Vietnam so that the former might then be consolidated by a line that would include Saigon and the Mekong.

Thieu had been considering since the summer of 1974 a contingency plan called the 'Aid Loan Plan' under which the RVN would approach Congress for a military aid loan to be repaid later. Saigon's offshore oil revenues would be offered as collateral for the loan; an alternative to 'open-ended aid' which might also forestall widespread criticism in Congress.[59] The idea, Thieu believed, could boost military planning with some assurance of a 'level and structure' of aid.

Another option was the suggestion by Vuong Van Bac in the autumn of 1974 that Thieu make a secret approach to China to request Peking to temper its support for both Hanoi and the PRG.[60] In return Saigon would come to an arrangement with Peking on offshore oil exploration in the South China Sea where a sea battle had been fought over the Paracels in January 1974 (See p.367). At the end of 1974 an approach was made on Saigon's behalf by a 'British Conservative Member of Parliament' to Deputy Foreign Minister Qiao Guanhua in Peking. But the Chinese remained committed to the PRG because Peking anticipated Hanoi's domination of Indochina.

In January 1974, Vuong Van Bac, as we have seen, visited Saudi Arabia for an exchange on oil technology (p.364).

That autumn he embarked on a campaign to win diplomatic support for Saigon from Morocco, the Ivory Coast and ~~Saudi~~ Saudi Arabia.[61] In early 1975 King Saud al Faisal in Riyadh agreed 'in principle' to a loan of several hundred million dollars to finance Saigon's purchase of fuel and ammunition as well as to revive the South Vietnamese economy.[62] Another proposal was also confirmed, Saudi Arabia would guarantee a US military aid loan to the RVN. Unfortunately the King was assassinated on 25 March 1975. Bac was sent to Riyadh soon after to urge the Saudis to consider the plan anyway. On 14 April Bac cabled Thieu to inform him that new King Khalid had given him 'strong assurances' about continued support and assistance.[63]

Meanwhile an alternative to military aid was conceived by Thieu in Saigon. Nguyen Tien Hung was dispatched to Washington on 15 April to seek postponement of a Congressional vote on the US$722 million requested by Ford in aid to South Vietnam. With more aid, Saigon might hold out long enough so that a negotiated end to the war could still be achieved - either in the form of a coalition government - or by Thieu's plan to hold Saigon and the Mekong delta.[64]

In his letter of 14 April 1975 to Ford, Thieu outlined the 'new and grave situation' on the ground and now asked the US President to request Congress for a 'final' longterm loan of US$3 billion. With a ten-year grace period, the loan, to be disbursed in three years, would have an interest

rate 'determined by Congress'.[65] South Vietnam's 'oil potential' and 'agricultural resources' were offered as collateral for the loan, called a 'Freedom Loan' to enable the South Vietnamese to defend themselves and to survive as a nation.

Unknown to Thieu and Hung however, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, in a rare move, requested a meeting with Ford the same day to discuss the situation in Southeast Asia.[66] The meeting, attended by Ford, Kissinger, Schlesinger and Scowcroft did not augur well for Saigon.

Hung had to make the final feasibility of the loan and complete his mission by 19 April, the deadline set by Ford for Congress to respond to his aid request. He was also to cable Thieu to dispatch the letter to Ford via Martin.[67] On 18 April the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted to reject additional military aid for Vietnam. The Vietnam debate, Kissinger said at that point, 'was over, the admintration will accept the Congress' verdict without recrimination and vindictiveness'.[68]

The Freedom Loan was not discussed. Hung gives a detailed account of the correspondence between Kissinger and Martin in the last days of the RVN administration emphasising that the Ambassador was convinced Saigon might still survive since the ARVN could 'hold the approaches' to the capital.[69] Martin was also hopeful that a 'negotiated solution' with the North Vietnamese might be a 'final solution'.[70]

But this presupposed Thieu step down and the envoy, had to convince the President that this was the only way to 'save what was left' of Vietnam.

The onslaughts of the PAVN made it increasingly untenable for Thieu to hold office. On 21 April 1975 he reluctantly resigned: Tran Van Huong was named the new President. Barely nine days later Saigon fell to the communists.

Japan's initiatives were frozen with the withdrawal of its diplomats from Saigon. It was not until 10 October 1975 that the Japanese Embassy opened in Hanoi, a 'solid diplomatic foothold in post-Vietnam war Indochina'.[71] The then Japanese Ambassador to Laos, Suganuma Kiyoshi, handed a 'note verbale' to the Hanoi government at the opening of the mission and signed a Yen 8,500 million economic aid agreement. Imagawa Yukio remained Chargé d'Affaires.[72]

The DRV Embassy in Tokyo opened on 9 January 1976. On 27 March 1976 Hasegawa Takaaki arrived in Hanoi to take up his post as Japan's first Ambassador there.[73]

NOTES

EPILOGUE

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3. Ibid., pp.242-243, 245.
4. The New York Times, 9 October 1974.
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7. Kyodo, 21 September 1974, SWB/FE/4711/A3/3.
8. Liberation Radio, 21 September 1974, SWB/FE/4711/A3/3.
9. Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 5 September 1974, in DSJP, 10 Sept -ember 1974, p. 32; Nikkan Kogyo, 6 September 1974, in DSJP, 7-9 September 1974, p.35.
10. Nihon Kogyo, 27 June 1974, in DSJP, 2 July 1974, p.21.
11. Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 29 June 1974, in DSJP, 4-5 July 1974, p.28.
12. Yomiuri Shimbun, 2 July 1974, in DSJP, 6-8 July 1974, p.27.
13. Kyodo, 19 August 1974, SWB/FE/4683/A3/7.
14. Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 1 September 1974, in DSJP, 6 September 1974, p.21.
15. Asahi Shimbun, 21 September 1974, in DSJP, 26 September 1974, p.16.

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17. Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 5 September 1974, in DSJP, 6 September 1974, p.33.

18. Tokyo Shimbun, 28 September 1974, in DSJP, 3 October 1974, p.8.

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26. Ibid.,

27. Kyodo, 23 October 1974, SWB/FE/4738/A3/2; Ibid., 24 October 1974, SWB/FE/4740/A3/4; Nihon Kogyo, 8 January 1975, in DSJP, 8 January 1975, p.27.

28. Nihon Kogyo, 16 November 1974, in DSJP, 23-25 November 1974, p.13.

29. Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 16 December 1974, in DSJP, 21-23 December 1974, p.8.

30. Yomiuri Shimbun, 3 January 1975, in DSJP, 31 December 1974 - 6 January 1975, p.18.

31. President Ford's Address before the Japan Press Club, 20 November 1974, in DSB, 23 December 1974, p.869.

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33. Saigon Home Service, 19 December 1974, SWB/FE/4787/A3/5.

34. Tran Van Tra, op.cit., p.92.

35. Ibid., pp.92-93.

36. Hanoi Home Service, 21 December 1974, SWB/FE/4789/A2/3.

37. Kyodo, 6 March 1974, SWB/FE/4849/A3/4.

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39. Kyodo, 15 March 1975, SWB/FE/4857/A3/6; 18 March 1975, SWB/FE/4859/A3/5.

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41. Mainichi Shimbun, 31 March 1975, in DSJP, 3 April 1975, p.17.

42. Asahi Shimbun, 23 March 1975, in DSJP, 26 March 1975, pp.4-5.

43. Tokyo Shimbun, 28 March 1975, in DSJP, 1 April 1975, p.32.

44. Sankei Shimbun, 2 April 1975, in DSJP, 4 April 1975, p.31

45. Yomiuri Shimbun, 3 April 1975, in DSJP, 5-7 April 1975, p.26.

46. Kyodo, 3 April 1975, SWB/FE/4869/A3/8.

47. Tokyo Shimbun, 6 April 1975, in DSJP, 12-14 April 1975, p.9.

48. Yomiuri Shimbun, 9 April 1975, in DSJP, 12-14 April 1975 p.27.

49. Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 9 April 1975, in DSJP, 16 April 1975, p.12.

50. Sankei Shimbun, 11 April 1975, in DSJP, 16 April 1975, p.10.

51. Yomiuri Shimbun, 11 April 1975, in DSJP, 16 April 1975, p.45.

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53. Sankei Shimbun, 12 April 1975, in DSJP, 19-21 April 1975 pp.16-17.

54. Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 13 April 1975, in DSJP, 17 April 1975, p.46.

55. Ibid., 13 April 1975, in DSJP, 19-21 April 1975, pp.18-19.

56. Saigon Home Service, 18 April 1975, SWB/FE/4883/A3/17.

57. Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 21 April 1975, DSJP, 25 April 1975 p.15.

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60. Ibid., pp.313-314.

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62. Ibid., p.306.

63. Ibid., p.319.

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66. Ibid., p.320.

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CONCLUSION

'.....we have to look at the intricacies of the peace agreement of 1973. Had that agreement been implemented as it was, it would be a very different situation than it is at the present time.

But as you know, there were two aspects of the agreement. One has been totally forgotten. The two aspects were: one, that the US would continue to support South Vietnam, just as the Soviets would be expected to be supporting North Vietnam. The other was that the US, in the event that the North Vietnamese complied with the terms, would also support them economically. In other words there was the economic package.'

Richard Nixon,
Time Magazine,
2 April 1990.

A prominent part of this thesis which emphasised Japan's role in the aftermath of the Paris Agreement to contribute to the stabilisation of Vietnam from 1973 until 1975 provides the basis for believing that the Paris Agreement of 1973 contained the bare essentials for establishing a framework for multilateral aid and peaceful reconstruction. But this depended entirely on the military and security situation: without a more secure ceasefire in South Vietnam, it proved impossible to work out anything more concrete for its potential 'stabilisation'.

It is clear in retrospect that the accord was flawed by the

first quarter of 1973 because it could not forestall the infiltration by Hanoi from Laos and the DMZ into South Vietnam. Even in mid-June 1973 when the Agreement was being 're-negotiated', the new communique did not contain any tougher clauses to guarantee its enforceability. By July-August 1973 it was not possible to secure agreement in Washington to extend the ceasefire to Cambodia. The Agreement was on the verge of collapse. By then it was evident that the Nixon Administration was no longer powerful enough and could not secure the confidence to enforce its own interpretation of the Paris Agreement. From then until the end of the year it became increasingly unlikely that the framework for stability in Indochina might work.

On the other hand, the Japanese 'dimension' providing the stabilising element to the peace which had its beginnings in early 1973, showed signs by 1974 of Tokyo increasingly undertaking a more responsible share of this role. In North Vietnam the visit of Miyake to Hanoi in April 1973 and the establishment of diplomatic relations in September seemed in the interim to have firmly secured a place for Tokyo in its dialogue with Hanoi. As we have seen, the single most important development after Tokyo's recognition of Hanoi was the evolution of the oil question. The visit of Hoang Quoc Viet to Japan in late 1973 and the possibility of Tokyo playing a major part in oil exploration in the Tonkin Gulf in the transition to 1974 demonstrated that Hanoi was seriously

contemplating the option of aid and reconstruction. But this had to be weighed against other considerations in Hanoi which ultimately favoured an offensive to secure 'victory'.

Although Japan's attempts in North Vietnam underwent some strains in the first quarter of 1974, by mid-year the momentum picked up again with construction, banking and industrial sectors expressing interest in reconstruction.Perhaps because of, rather than despite President Nixon's resignation in August 1974, it became imperative for Tokyo to set up an embassy in Hanoi and the process to do so was accelerated. Japan, it might be conjectured, wanted to have a place in Vietnam and a voice in its resolution. Until the very last days of the Nguyen Van Thieu regime, Tokyo exercised its unique position and was unrelenting in its commitment to play a critical part in the potential stabilisation of the 'peace' in Vietnam.

The oil factor and its possible part in the move towards economic self-sufficiency and possible survival in South Vietnam remains relevant to the pattern of economic development of Indochina. Thieu's eight-year economic plan, the opening of concessions to international consortia in July 1973 and again in August 1974, coupled with efforts on the part of Japanese big business to invest in the country, made the probability of an economic take-off very real, but only if the RVN continued to exist.

The notion that the war was being fought in Vietnam,

particularly in the last stages in 1974-75, because of the potential oil wealth in the South, is an idea that might be further examined. Hanoi's furious offensives from January 1975 onwards could have been directed in large measure to the oil potential that might eventually be generated in the South. Ironically 1975 was the year in which offshore exploration of oil was to have moved into fullgear. South Vietnam might have been much less amenable to conquest had it been allowed more time to develop this resource.

The circumstances in Vietnam after January 1973 contained many ingredients that could have eased the transition there from war to peace and to eventual stability. But the authors of the Paris Agreement failed to comprehend the depth of Hanoi's commitment to reunification which would ultimately supercede any other consideration. Although Hanoi's victory in the South might have been a factor making for disruption, in the context of the intended framework for peace, the passage to the present has not seen a diminution of the essential importance of these ingredients for stable development of Indochina as a whole.

Its limitations notwithstanding, the Agreement exacerbated the growth in its aftermath of a new framework of relations in Indochina and East Asia to inaugurate the beginnings of the prevailing international order. It encouraged the emergence of Japan as participant in the shaping of an economic framework for Indochina, providing in the process the impetus for Japan's

subsequent involvement in Asia in a role commensurate with its economic power.

At the time of writing, these themes appear to have re-emerged in Vietnam and to a lesser extent, in Cambodia, in the transition from the late 1980's to the early 1990's.

There is little doubt that Japan seriously intends in the last decade of the 20th century, to play a big part in promoting the stability of Indochina, whose stability is 'necessary' for all Asia. Tokyo now plans to head efforts in furthering the economic development of Indochina using Thailand as its base of operations. Bangkok's policy of turning the region's battlefields into a marketplace are also in line with Tokyo's principle of contributing to peace and the economic development of Indochina.

As the country expected to make the largest contribution to the economic reconstruction of Indochina after the settlement of the Cambodian issue, Japan might use the promise of financial aid as a 'card' to move things in the right direction.

Until recently, Japan was Vietnam's second biggest trading partner after the Soviet Union. In 1990, according to the Japan-Vietnam Trade Association, Japan surpassed the Soviet Union to become Vietnam's biggest trading partner with US$700 million in bilateral trade. And as assistance from Moscow declines, Vietnam is expected to increase its contacts with the US and Japan in the hope of obtaining assistance from both.

Vietnam besides, appears keen to shift its centrally-controlled economy to one governed by market forces. In 1987 Hanoi promulgated an Investment Law which was amended last year to allow both state-owned as well as private local companies to enter directly into joint ventures with foreign partners.

Already, Japanese trading houses are laying the groundwork for a big push into Vietnam in the 1990's because of the country's commercial potential. The belief too that Tokyo and Washington might soon lift economic sanctions against Hanoi has encouraged these moves. One of Japan's nine biggest trading companies, Nissho-Iwai - which as we have seen had been making forays into Vietnam in the early 1970's - already has an office in Vietnam and Mitsubishi, Marubeni and Sumitomo are waiting for approvals from Hanoi. These companies are now expected to engage in activities ranging from the development of natural resources to coordinating possible joint ventures between Japanese and Vietnamese companies, a pattern reminiscent of the 1970's. Overall trade between Japan and Vietnam is also on the rise.

Vietnam has been producing oil off the coast of Vung Tau since 1981 through its joint venture with the Soviet Union, VIETSOVPETRO (Vietnam-Soviet Union Petroleum Company). In April 1984 the company initiated offshore drilling and discovered two oilfields, the 'White Tiger' and the 'Dragon' on the continental shelf. Two years later commercial production began.

Vietnam's proven oil reserves are no doubt the most important single factor for Japan, currently its biggest customer. In 1973 'dummy' companies like Nikkyo Boeki were used to get a foothold into North Vietnam. Since late 1987 Mitsubishi has been importing crude oil from Vietnam through the Meiwa Trading Co., an affiliate specialising in trade with communist countries.

In a remarkable development, again with parallels in the 1970's, Hanoi has been studying in 1990-91 the possibility of a three-way joint venture with the Soviet Union, the US and Vietnam to involve the American oil company, Mobil. Mobil, as we have seen, was one of the pioneers of oil exploration in South Vietnam having discovered oil off its coast in late 1974. In early April 1991 Vietnam set up a maritime shipping company that would export crude oil and natural gas and import fuels, responsible for transporting crude oil overseas, beginning with Japan and Singapore.

There are other important parallels to events in the early 1970's. Following the meeting in early April 1991 between US Assistant Secretary of State Richard Solomon and Vietnam's Permanent Representative to the UN, Trinh Xuan Lang, there is a prospect of the US normalising relations with Vietnam.This was evident in the Bush Administration's proposal in mid-April of a time-table that might partially life the trade embargo against Hanoi by the end of 1991. If Hanoi and its allies in Phnom Penh agree to sign a Cambodian peace accord in the summer, a high-level US team might visit Vietnam to begin talks on normalisation by year's end.

A proposed four-step rapprochement centreing on the signature

of the peace accord would see the establishment in the final phase, of an elected government in Cambodia and full diplomatic relations between the US and Vietnam. Most favoured nation trading status would be granted to Vietnam and all restrictions on lending by the World Bank, the ADB and other international financial institutions removed.

T o stabilise growth and improve the infrastructure of Vietnam, the idea of the consortium arrangement discussed may be resurrected in different form. Aid to Vietnam had been suspended in 1978 because of its invasion of Cambodia. To examine the possibility of resuming aid, the ADB sent a top-secret economic mission to Vietnam in November-December 1988, followed a year later by another mission to study possible funding for an irrigation project in the Red River delta.

In early February 1991 the World Bank sponsored a two-day symposium on development strategy in Kuala Lumpur attended by economic planners from Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia and South Korea. The symposium briefed Vietnam on the development of a market economy. However until Vietnam resolves its arrears to certain countries and to the IMF in particular, it could encounter obstacles to obtaining foreign aid from the World Bank.

Vietnam itself has been making forays into the ASEAN region. Preceding his official visit to Malaysia (6-10 February 1991) by attending the World Bank symposium, Vo Van Kiet, Vietnam's current First Deputy Prime Minister, sought assistance in its own process of renoation, 'doi moi' inaugurated in 1986. Malaysia

proposed that Vietnam join the East Asian Economic Grouping (EAEG), and a Malaysia-Vietnam Joint Committee be set up to study assistance to the latter, including expertise in oil exploration from Petronas, the Malaysian national petroleum enterprise.

Ho Chi Minh City, formerly Saigon, played host to an 'Investment Forum for Vietnam' (11-15 March 1991) aimed at encouraging the international business establishment to consider investing in the country. The forum was Vietnam's biggest effort in this direction; some 187 local industrial projects sought foreign partners. Vo Van Kiet, who opened the conference, reiterated that Vietnam was committed to economic reforms that would integrate its economy to that of the world market. The country was moreover attempting to develop its legal foundations, financial system and regulatory framework to encourage and protect businesses.

These themes are reminiscent of those in 1973-74 which formed a significant part of Nixon's design for a 'structure of peace' in Asia. The immediate aftermath of the Paris Agreement might thus be placed in the context of the realities of the time, the passage of which has not diminished the essential relevance of the initiatives for stability.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

TEXT OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT ON ENDING
THE WAR AND RESTORING PEACE IN VIETNAM
27 JANUARY 1973
(THE NEW YORK TIMES, 28 JANUARY 1973.)

A. THE MAIN AGREEMENT

The parties participating in the Paris conference on Vietnam, with a view to ending the war and restoring peace in Vietnam on the basis of respect for the Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights and the South Vietnamese people's rights to self-determination, and to contributing to the consolidation of peace in Asia and the world, have agreed on the following provisions and undertake to respect and implement them:

CHAPTER I

The Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights.

ARTICLE 1

The United States and all other countries respect the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Vietnam as recognised by the 1954 Geneva agreements on Vietnam.

CHAPTER II

Cessation of hostilities - withdrawal of troops.

ARTICLE 2

A ceasefire shall be observed throughout South Vietnam as of 24.00 GMT, on January 27, 1973.

At the same hour, the United States will stop all its military activities against the territory of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, by ground, air and naval forces, wherever they may be based, and end the mining of the territorial waters, ports, harbours, and waterways of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

The United States will remove, permanently deactivate or destroy all the mines in the territorial waters, ports, harbours, and waterways of North Vietnam as soon as this agreement goes into effect.

The complete cessation of hostilities mentioned in this article shall be durable and without limit of time.

ARTICLE 3

The parties undertake to maintain the ceasefire and to ensure a lasting and stable peace.

As soon as the ceasefire goes into effect:

(A) The United States forces and those of the other foreign countries allied with the United States and the Republic of Vietnam shall remain in place pending the implementation of the plan of troop withdrawal. The four-party joint military commission described in Article 16 shall determine the modalities.

(B) The armed forces of the two South Vietnamese parti-

es shall remain in place. The two-party joint military commssion described in Article 17 shall determine the areas cont -rolled by each party and the modalities of stationing.

(C) The regular forces of all services and arms and the irregular forces of the parties in South Vietnam shall stop all offensive activities against each other and shall strictly abide by the following stipulations:

All acts of force on the ground, in the air, and on the sea shall be prohibited:

All hostile acts, terrorism and reprisals by both sides will be banned.

ARTICLE 4

The United States will not continue its military involvement or intervene in the internal affairs of South Vietnam.

ARTICLE 5

Within 60 days of the signing of this agreement, there will be a total withdrawal from South Vietnam of troops, military advisers, and military personnel, including technical military personnel and military personnel associated with the pacification programmes, armaments, munitions and war material of the United States and those of the other foreign countries mentioned in Article 3 (A). Advisers from the above-mentioned countries to all paramilitary organisations and the police force will also be withdrawn within the same period of time.

ARTICLE 6

The dismantlement of all military bases in South Vietnam of the United States and of the other foreign countries mentioned in Article 3(A) shall be completed within 60 days of the signing of this agreement.

ARTICLE 7

From the enforcement of the ceasefire to the formation of the Government provided for in Articles 9 (B) and 14 of agreement, the two South Vietnamese parties shall not accept the introduction of troops, military advisers, and military personnel, including technical military personnel, armaments munitions, and war material into South Vietnam.

The two South Vietnamese parties shall be permitted to make periodic replacements of armaments, munitions and war material which have been destroyed, damaged, worn out or used up after the ceasefire, on the basis of piece-for-piece of the same characteristics and properties, under the supervision of the joint military commission of the two South Vie -tnamese parties and of the international commission of control and supervision.

CHAPTER III

The return of captured military personnel and foreign civilians, and captured and detained Vietnamese civilian personnel.

ARTICLE 8

(A) The return of captured military personnel and

foreign civilians of the parties shall be carried out simultaneously with and completed not later than the same day as the troop withdrawal mentioned in Article 5. The parties shall exchange complete lists of the above-mentioned captured military personnel and foreign civilians on the day of the signing of this agreement.

(B) The parties shall help each other to get information about those military personnel and foreign civilians of the parties missing in action, to determine the location and take care of the graves of the dead so as to facilitate the exhumation and repatriation of the remains, and to take any such other measures as may be required to get information about those still considered missing in action.

(C) The question of the return of Vietnamese civilian personnel captured and detained in South Vietnam will be resolved by the two South Vietnamese parties on the basis of the principles of Article 21 (B) of the agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Vietnam of July 20, 1954.

The two South Vietnamese parties will do so in a spirit of national reconciliation and accord, with a view to ending hatred and enmity, in order to ease suffering and to reunite families. The two South Vietnamese parties will do their utmost to resolve this question within 90 days after the cease -fire comes into effect.

CHAPTER IV

The exercise of the South Vietnamese people's right of

self-determination.

ARTICLE 9

The Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam undertake to respect the following principles for the exercise of the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination:

(A) The South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination is sacred, inalienable, and shall be respected by all countries.

(B) The South Vietnamese people shall decide themselves the political future of South Vietnam through genuinely free and democratic general elections under international supervision.

(C) Foreign countries shall not impose any political tendency or personality on the South Vietnamese people.

ARTICLE 10

The two South Vietnamese parties undertake to respect the ceasefire and maintain peace in South Vietnam, settle all matters of contention through negotiations, and avoid all armed conflict.

ARTICLE 11

Immediately after the ceasefire, the two South Vietnamese parties will:

Achieve national reconciliation and concord, end hatred and enmity, prohibit all acts of reprisal and discrimination against individuals or organisations that have collaborated with one side or the other;

Ensure the democratic liberties of the people: personal freedom, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of meeting, freedom of organisation, freedom of political activ -ities, freedom of belief, freedom of movement, freedom of residence, freedom of work, right to property ownership and right to free enterprise.

ARTICLE 12

(A) Immediately after the ceasefire, the two South Vietnamese parties shall hold consultations in a spirit of national reconciliation and concord, mutual respect and mutual non-elimination to set up a national council of national reconciliation and concord of three equal segments.

The council shall operate on the principle of unanimity. After the national council of national reconciliation and concord has assumed its functions, the two South Vietnamese parties will consult about the formation of councils at lower levels.

The two South Vietnamese parties shall sign an agreement on internal matters of South Vietnam as soon as possible and do their utmost to accomplish this within 90 days after the ceasefire comes into effect, in keeping with the South Vietnamese people's aspirations for peace, independence and democracy.

(B) The national council of national reconciliation and concord shall have the task of promoting the two South Vietnamese parties' implementation of this agreement, achieve-

ment of national reconciliation and concorde and ensurance of democratic liberties.

The national council of national reconciliation and concord will organise the free and democratic general elections provided for in Article 9 (B) and decide the procedures and modalities of these general elections.

The institutions for which the general elections are to be held will be agreed upon through consultations between the two South Vietnamese parties. The national council of national reconciliation and concord will also decide the pro -cedures and modalities of such local elections as the two South Vietnamese parties agreed upon.

ARTICLE 13

The question of Vietnamese armed forces in South Vietnam shall be settled by the two South Vietnamese parties in a spirit of national reconciliation and concord, equality and mutual respect, without foreign interference, in accordance with the postwar situation:

Among the questions to be discussed by the two South Vietnamese parties are steps to reduce their military effectives and to demobilise their troops being reduced. The two South Vietnamese parties will accomplish this as soon as possible.

ARTICLE 14

South Vietnam will pursue a foreign policy of peace and independence.It will be prepared to establish relations with

all countries irrespective of their political and social systems on the basis of mutual respect for independence and sovereignty, and accept economic and technical aid from any country with no political conditions attached.

The acceptance of military aid by South Vietnam in the future shall come under the authority of the government set up after the general elections in South Vietnam provided for in Article 9 (B).

CHAPTER V

The reunification of Vietnam and the relationship between North and South Vietnam.

ARTICLE 15

The reunification of Vietnam shall be carried out step by step through peaceful means on the basis of discussion and agreements between North and South Vietnam, without coercion or annexation by either part, and without foreign interference. The time for reunification will be agreed upon by North and South Vietnam.

Pending the reunification:

(A) The military demarcation line between the two zones at the 17th parallel is only provisional and not a political or territorial boundary, as provided for in Paragraph 6 of the final declaration of the 1954 Geneva conference.

(B) North and South Vietnam shall respect the demilitarised zone on either side of the provisional military demarcation line.

(C) North and South Vietnam shall promptly start nego -tians with a view to reestablishing normal relations in various fields. Among the questions to be negotiated are the modalities of civilian movement across the provisional demarcation line.

(D) North and South Vietnam shall not join any military alliance or military bloc and shall not allow foreign powers to maintain military bases, troops, military advisers, and military personnel on their respective territories, as stipula- ted in the 1954 Geneva agreements on Vietnam.

CHAPTER VI

The joint military commissions, the international comm- ssion of control and supervision, the international conference.

ARTICLE 16

(A) The parties participating in the Paris conference on Vietnam shall immediately designate representatives to form a four-party joint military commission with the task of ensuring joint action by the parties in implementing the following the following provisions of this agreement:

The first paragraph of Article 2, regarding the enforce -ment of the ceasefire throughout South Vietnam:

Article 3 (A), regarding the ceasefire by United States forces and those of the other foreign countries referred to in that article;

Article 3 (C), regarding the ceasefire between all par- ties in South Vietnam;

Article 5, regarding the withdrawal from South Vietnam of United States troops and those of the other foreign countries mentioned in Article 3 (A);

Article 6, regarding the dismantlement of military bases in South Vietnam of the United States and those of the other foreign countries mentioned in Article 3 (A);

Article 8 (A), regarding the return of captured military personnel and foreign civilians of the parties:

Article 8 (B), regarding the mutual assistance of the parties in getting information about those military personnel and foreign civilians of the parties missing in action.

(B) The four-party joint military commission shall operate in accordance with the principle of consultations and unanimity. Disagreements shall be referred to the international commission of control and supervision.

(C) The four-party joint military commission shall begin operating immediately after the signing of the agreement and end its activities in 60 days, after the completion of the withdrawal of United States troops and those of the other foreign countries mentioned in Article 3 (A) and the completion of the return of captured military personnel and foreign civilians of the parties.

(D) The four parties shall agree immediately on the organisation, the working procedure, means of activity, and expenditures of the four-party joint military commission.

ARTICLE 17

(A) The two South Vietnamese parties shall immediately designate representatives to form a two-party joint military commission with the task of ensuring joint action by the two South Vietnamese parties in implementing the following provi -sions of this agreement:

The first paragraph of Article 2, regarding the enforcement of the ceasefire throughout South Vietnam, when the four-party joint military commission has ended its activities:

Article 3 (B), regarding the ceasefire between the two South Vietnamese parties;

Article 3 (C), regarding the ceasefire between all parties in South Vietnam, when the four-party joint military commission has ended its activities;

Article 7 regarding the prohibition of the introduction of troops into South Vietnam and all other provisions of this article;

Article 8 (C), regarding the question of the return of Vietnamese civilian personnel captured and detained in South Vietnam;

Article 13, regarding the reduction of the military eff -ectives of the two South Vietnamese parties and the demobilisation of the troops being reduced.

(B) Disagreements shall be referred to the international commission of control and supervision.

(C) After the signing of this agreement, the two-party

joint military commission shall agree immediately on the measures and organisation aimed at enforcing the ceasefire and preserving peace in South Vietnam.

ARTICLE 18

(A) After the signing of this agreement, an internatio -nal commission of control and supervision shall be establi -shed immediately.

(B) Until the international conference provided for in Article 19 makes definitive arrangements, the international commission of control and supervision will report to the four parties on matters concerning the control and supervi-sion of the implementation of the following procedures of this agreement:

The first paragraph of Article 2, regarding the enfor-cement of the ceasefire through South Vietnam;

Article 3 (A), regarding the ceasefire by United States forces and those of the other foreign countries referred to in that article:

Article 3 (C), regarding the ceasefire between all the parties in South Vietnam;

Article 5, regarding the withdrawal from South Vietnam of South Vietnamese troops and those of the other foreign countries mentioned in Article 3 (A);

Article 6 regarding the dismantlement of military bases in South Vietnam of the United States and those of the other foreign countries mentioned in Article 3 (A);

Article 8 (A), regarding the return of captured milita -ry personnel and foreign civilians of the parties.

The international commission of control and supervision shall form control teams for carrying out its tasks. The four parties shall agree immediately on the location and operation of these teams. The parties will facilitate their operation.

(C) Until the international conference makes definitive arrangements, the international commission of control and supervision will report to the two South Vietnamese parties on matters concerning the control and supervision of the implementation of the following provisions of this agreement:

The first paragraph of Article 2, regarding the enforce -ment of the ceasefire throughout South Vietnam, when the four-party joint military commission has ended its activit- ies;

Article 3 (B), regarding the ceasefire between the two parties;

Article 3 (C), regarding the ceasefire between all par- ties in South Vietnam, when the four-party joint military commission has ended its activities;

Article 7, regarding the prohibition of the introduct- ion of troops into South Vietnam and all other provisions of this article;

Article 8 (C), regarding the question of the return of

Vietnamese civilian personnel captured and detained in South Vietnam;

Article 9 (B), regarding the free and democratic general elections in South Vietnam;

Article 13, regarding the reduction of the military effectives of the two South Vietnamese parties and the demobilisation of the troops being reduced.

The international commission of control and supervision shall form control teams for carrying out its tasks. The two South Vietnamese parties shall agree immediately on the location and operation of these teams. The two South Vietnamese parties will facilitate their operations.

(D) The international commission of control and supervision shall be composed of representatives of four countries Canada, Hungary, Indonesia and Poland. The chairmanship of this commission will rotate among the members for specific periods to be determined by the commission.

(E) The international commission of control and supervision shall carry out its tasks in accordance with the principle of respect for the sovereignty of South Vietnam.

(F) The international commission of control and supervision shall operate in accordance with the principle of consultations and unanimity.

(G) The international commission of control and supervision shall begin operating when a ceasefire comes into force in Vietnam. As regards the provisions in Article 18 (B)

concerning the four parties, the international commission of control and supervision shall end its activities when the commission's tasks of control and supervision regarding these provisions have been fulfilled.

As regards the provisions in Article 18 (C) concerning the two South Vietnamese parties, the international commiss -ion of control and supervision shall end its activities on the request of the government formed after the general elections in South Vietnam provided for in Article 9 (B).

(H) The four parties shall agree immediately on the org -anisation, means of activity, and expenditures of the inter -national commission of control and supervision. The relationship between the international commission and the international conference will be agreed upon by the international commission and the international conference.

ARTICLE 19

The parties agree on the convening of an international conference within 30 days of the signing of this agreement to acknowledge the signed agreements; to guarantee the ending of the war, the maintenance of peace in Vietnam, the res -pect of the Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights and the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination; and to contribute to and guarantee peace in Indochina.

The United States and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, on behalf of the parties participating in the Paris Con -ference on Vietnam, will propose to the following parties

that they participate in this international conference:
the People's Republic of China, the Republic of France, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom, the four countries of the international commission of control and supervision, and the Secretary-General of the United Nat -ions, together with the parties participating in the Paris Conference on Vietnam.

CHAPTER VII

Regarding Cambodia and Laos.

ARTICLE 20

(A) The parties participating in the Paris Conference on Vietnam shall strictly respect the 1954 Geneva agreements on Cambodia and the 1962 Geneva agreements on Laos, which recognised the Cambodian and the Lao people's fundamental national rights, i.e. the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of these countries. The parties shall respect the neutrality of Cambodia and Laos.

The parties participating in the Paris conference on Vietnam undertake to refrain from using the territory of Cambodia and the territory of Laos to encroach on the sover -eignty and security of one another and of other countries.

(B) Foreign countries shall put an end to all military activities in Cambodia and Laos, totally withdraw from and refrain from reintroducing into these two countries troops, military advisers, and military personnel, armaments, munit-ions and war material.

(C) The internal affairs of Cambodia and Laos shall be settled by the people of each of these countries without for -eign interference.

(D) The problems existing between the Indochinese countries shall be settled by the Indochinese parties on the basis of respect for each other's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and non-interference in each other's internal affairs.

CHAPTER VIII

The relationship between the United States and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

ARTICLE 21

The United States anticipates that this agreement will usher in an era of reconciliation with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam as with all the peoples of Indochina. In pursuance of its traditional policy, the United States will con -tribute to healing the wounds of war and to postwar reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and throughout Indochina.

ARTICLE 22

The ending of the war, the restoration of peace in Viet -nam, and the strict implementation of the agreement will create conditions for establishing a new, equal and mutually beneficial relationship between the United States and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on the basis of respect for

each other's independence and sovereignty, and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. At the same time, this will ensure stable peace in Vietnam and contribute to the preservation of lasting peace in Indochina and Southeast Asia.

CHAPTER IX

Other Provisions

ARTICLE 23

This agreement will enter into force upon signature by plenipotentiary representatives of the parties participating in the Paris conference on Vietnam. All the parties concerned shall strictly implement this agremeent and its protocols.

Done in Paris this twenty-seventh day of January, one thousand nine hundred and seventy-three, in Vietnamese and English. The Vietnamese and English texts are officially and equally authentic.

For the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam.	For the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam
NGUYEN THI BINH Minister for Foreign Affairs	NGUYEN DUY TRINH Minister for Foreign Affairs
For the Government of the United States of America	For the Government of the Republic of Vietnam
WILLIAM P. ROGERS Secretary of State	TRAN VAN LAM Minister for Foreign Affairs

APPENDIX II

TEXT OF TWO PARTY JOINT COMMUNIQUE

PARIS, 13 JUNE 1973.

(DSB, 9 July 1973, pp.50-55.)

From May 17 to May 23, from June 6 to June 9, and on June 12 and June 13, 1973, Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, on behalf of the Government of the United States of America, and Mr.Le Duc Tho, on behalf of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, reviewed the implementation of the Paris Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam and its Protocols and discussed urgent measures to ensure the correct and strict implementation of the Agreement and its Protocols.

The Government of the United States of America, with the concurrence of the Government of the Republic of Vietnam,

The Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, with the concurrence of the Provisional Revolutionary Govern -ment of the Republic of South Vietnam,

Considering that strict respect and scrupulous implemen -tation of all provisions of the Paris Agreement and its Pro -tocols by all the parties signatory to them are necessary to ensure the peace in Vietnam and contribute to the cause of peace in Indochina and Southeast Asia,

Have agreed on the following points (in the sequence of the relevant articles in the Agreement):

1) In conformity with Article 2 of the Agreement, the United States shall cease immediately, completely, and indefinitely aerial reconnaissance over the territory of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

2) In conformity with Article 2 of the Agreement and with the Protocol on Mine Clearance:

(A) The United States shall resume mine clearance opera -tions within five days from the date of signature of this Joint Communique and shall successfully complete those opera -tions within thirty days thereafter.

(B) The United States shall supply to the Democratic Re -public of Vietnam means which are agreed to be adequate and sufficient for sweeping mines in rivers.

(C) The United States shall announce when the mine clea -rance in each main channel is completed and issue a final announcement when all the operations are completed.

3) In implementation of Article 2 of the Agreement, at 1200 hours, GMT, June 14, 1973, the High Commands of the two South Vietnamese parties shall issue identical orders to all regular and irregular armed forces and the armed police under their command, to strictly observe the ceasefire through -out South Vietnam beginning at 1400 hours, GMT, June 15, 1973, and scrupulously implement the Agreement and its Proto -cols.

4) The two South Vietnamese parties shall strictly implement Articles 2 and 3 of the Protocol on the Ceasefire in South Vietnam which read as follows:

" ARTICLE 2

(A) As soon as the ceasefire comes into force and until regulations are issued by the Joint Military Commissions, all ground, river, sea and air combat forces of the parties in South Vietnam shall remain in place; that is, in order to ensure a stable ceasefire, there shall be no major redeployments or movements that would extend each party's area of control or would result in contact between opposing armed forces and clashes which might take place.

(B) All regular and irregular armed forces and the armed police of the parties in South Vietnam shall observe the prohibition of the following acts:

(1) Armed patrols into areas controlled by opposing armed forces and flights by bomber and fighter aircraft of all types, except for unarmed flights for proficiency training and maintenance;

(2) Armed attacks against any person, either military or civilian, by any means whatsoever, including the use of small arms, mortars, artillery, bombing and strafing by airplanes and any other type of weapon or explosive device;

(3) All combat operations on the ground, on rivers, on the sea and in the air;

(4) All hostile acts, terrorism or reprisals; and

(5) All acts endangering lives or public or private property.

ARTICLE 3

(A) The above-mentioned prohibitions shall not hamper or restrict:

(1) Civilian supply, freedom of movement, freedom to work, and freedom of the people to engage in trade, and civi -lian communication and transportation between and among all areas in South Vietnam;

(2) The use by each party in areas under its control of military support elements, such as engineer and transportation units, in repair and construction of public facilities and the transportation and supplying of the population;

(3) Normal military proficiency training conducted by the parties in the areas under their respective control with due regard for public safety.

(B) The Joint Military Commissions shall immediately agree on corridors, routes, and other regulations governing the movement of military transport vehicles, and military transport vessels of all types of one party going through areas under the control of other parties."

5) The Two-Party Joint Military Commission shall immediately carry out its task pursuant to Article 3 (B) of the

Agreement to determine the areas controlled by each of the two South Vietnamese parties and the modalities of stationing. This task shall be completed as soon as possible. The Commission shall also immediately discuss the movements necessary to accomplish a return of the armed forces of the two South Vietnamese parties to the positions they occupied at the time the ceasefire entered into force on January 28, 1973.

6) Twenty-four hours after the ceasefire referred to in paragraph 3 enters into force, the commanders of the opposing armed forces at those places of direct contact shall meet to carry out the provisions of Article 4 of the Protocol on the Ceasefire in South Vietnam with a view to reaching an agreement on temporary measures to avert conflict and to ensure supply and medical care for these armed forces.

7) In conformity with Article 7 of the Agreement:

(A) The two South Vietnamese parties shall not accept the introduction of troops, military advisers, and military personnel, including technical military personnel, into South Vietnam.

(B) The two South Vietnamese parties shall not accept the introduction of armaments, munitions, and war material into South Vietnam. However, the South Vietnamese parties are permitted to make periodic replacement of armaments, munitions, and war material, as authorised by Article 7 of

the Agreement, through designated points of entry and subject to supervision by the Two-Party Joint Military Commiss -ion and the International Commission of Conntrol and Supervision.

In conformity with Article 15 (B) of the Agreement regarding the respect of the Demilitarised Zone, military equi -pment may transit the Demilitarised Zone only if introduced into South Vietnam as replacements pursuant to Article 7 of the Agreement and through a designated point of entry.

(C) Twenty-four hours after the entry into force of the ceasefire referred to in paragraph 3, the Two-Party Joint Military Commission shall discuss the modalities for the supervision of the replacements of armaments, munitions, and war material permitted by Article 7 of the Agreement at the three points of entry already agreed upon for each party. Within fifteen days of the entry into force of the ceasefire referred to in paragraph 3, the two South Vietnamese parties shall also designate by agreement three additional points of entry for each party in the area controlled by that party.

8) In conformity with Article 8 of the Agreement:

(A) Any captured personnel covered by Article 8(A) of the Agreement who have not yet been returned shall be return -ed without delay, and in any event within no more than thir -ty days from the date of signature of this Joint Communique

(B) All the provisions of the Agreement and the Protocol

on the Return of Captured Personnel shall be scrupulously implemented. All Vietnamese civilian personnel covered by Article 8(C) of the Agreement and Article 7 of the Protocol on the Return of Captured Personnel shall be returned as soon as possible. The two South Vietnamese parties shall do their utmost to accomplish this within forty-five days from the date of signature of this Joint Communique.

(C) In conformity with Article 8 of the Protocol on the Return of Captured Personnel, all captured and detained personnel covered by that Protocol shall be treated humanely at all times. The two South Vietnamese parties shall immedia -tely implement Article 9 of that Protocol and, within fifteen days from the date of signature of this Joint Communique allow National Red Cross Societies they have agreed upon to visit all places where these personnel are held.

(D) The two South Vietnamese parties shall cooperate in obtaining information about missing persons and in determining the location of and in taking care of the graves of the dead.

(E) In conformity with Article 8 (B) of the Agreement, the parties shall help each other to get information about those military personnel and foreign civilians of the parties missing in action, to determine the location and take care of the graves of the dead so as to facilitate the exhumation and repatriation of the remains, and to take any such other measures as may be required to get information

about those still considered missing in action. For this purpose, frequent and regular liaison flights shall be made between Saigon and Hanoi.

9) The two South Vietnamese parties shall implement Article 11 of the Agreement, which reads as follows:

"Immediately after the ceasefire, the two South Vietnam -ese parties will:

- achieve national reconciliation and concord, end hat- red and enmity, prohibit all acts of reprisal and discrimina -tion against individuals or organisations that have collab- orated with one side or the other;

- ensure the democratic liberties of the people: person -al freedom, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, free- dom of meeting, freedom organisation, freedom of political activities, freedom of belief, freedom of movement, freedom of residence, freedom of work, right to property ownership and right to free enterprise."

10) Consistent with the principles for the exercise of the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination stated in Chapter IV of the Agreement:

(A) The South Vietnamese people shall decide themselves the political future of South Vietnam through genuinely free and democratic general elections under international super- vision.

(B) The National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord consisting of three equal segments shall be formed as soon as possible, in conformity with Article 12 of the Agreement.

The two South Vietnamese parties shall sign an agreement on the internal matters of South Vietnam as soon as possible, and shall do their utmost to accomplish this with -in forty-five days from the date of signature of this Joint Communique.

(C) The two South Vietnamese parties shall agree through consultations on the institutions for which the free and democratic general elections provided for in Article 9 (B) of the Agreement will be held.

(D) The two South Vietnamese parties shall implement Article 13 of the Agreement, which reads as follows:

"The question of Vietnamese armed forces in South Vietnam shall be settled by the two South Vietnamese parties in a spirit of national reconciliation and concord, equality and mutual respect, without foreign interference, in accordance with the postwar situation. Among the questions to be discussed by the two South Vietnamese parties are steps to reduce their military effectives and to demobilise the troops being reduced. The two South Vietnamese parties will accomplish this as soon as possible."

11) In implementation of Article 17 of the Agreement:

(A) All the provisions of Articles 16 and 17 of the Protocol on the Ceasefire in South Vietnam shall immediately be implemented with respect to the Two-Party Joint Military Commission. That Commission shall also immediately be accorded the eleven points of privileges and immunities agreed upon by the Four-Party Joint Military Commission. Frequent and regular liaison flights shall be made between Saigon and the headquarters of the Regional Two-Party Joint Military Commissions and other places in South Vietnam as required for the operations of the Two-Party Joint Military Commission. Frequent and regular liaison flights shall also be made between Saigon and Loc Ninh.

(B) The headquarters of the Central Two-Party Joint Military Commission shall be located in Saigon proper at a place agreed upon by the two South Vietnamese parties where an area controlled by one of them adjoins an area controlled by the other. The locations of the headquarters of the Regional Two-Party Joint Military Commissions and of the teams of the Two-Party Joint Military Commission shall be determin -ed by that Commission within fifteen days after the entry into force of the ceasefire referred to in paragraph 3. These locations may be changed at any time as determined by the Commission. The locations, except for teams at the points of entry, shall be selected from among those towns specified in Article 11 (B) and (C) of the Protocol on the Ceasefire in South Vietnam and those places where an area control

-led by the other, or at any other place agreed upon by the Commission.

(C) Once the privileges and immunities mentioned in paragraph 11(A) are accorded by both South Vietnamese parties the Two-Party Joint Military Commission shall be fully staff -ed and its regional commissions and teams fully deployed within fifteen days after the locations have been determined

(D) The Two-Party Joint Military Commission and the Int -ernational Commission of Control and Supervision shall clos -ely cooperate with and assist each other in carrying out their respective functions.

12) In conformity with Article 18 of the Agreement and Article 10 of the Protocol on the International Commission of Control and Supervision, the International Commission, including its teams, is allowed such movement for observation as is reasonably required for the proper exercise of its functions as stipulated in the Agreement.In carrying out these functions, the International Commission, including its teams shall enjoy all necessary assistance and cooperation from the parties concerned. The two South Vietnamese parties shall issue the necessary instructions to their personnel and take all other necessary measures to ensure the safety of such movement.

13) Article 20 of the Agreement, regarding Cambodia and Laos, shall be scrupulously implemented.

14) In conformity with Article 21 of the Agreement, the

United States-Democratic Republic of Vietnam Joint Economic Commission shall resume its meetings four days from the date of signature of this Joint Communique and shall complete the first phase of its work within fifteen days thereafter.

Affirming that the parties concerned shall strictly respect and scrupulously implement all the provisions of the Paris Agreement, its Protocols, this Joint Communique, and a Joint Communique in the same terms signed by representatives of the Government of the United States of America, the Government of the Republic of Vietnam, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam, the representative of the United States of America, Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, and the representative of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Mr. Le Duc Tho, have decided to issue this Joint Communique to record and publish the points on which they have agreed.

Signed in Paris, June 13, 1973.

For the Government of the United States of America	For the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam
HENRY A. KISSINGER Assistant to the President of the United States of America	LE DUC THO Representative of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam

APPENDIX III

SECRETARY KISSINGER RESPONDS TO SENATOR KENNEDY ON INDOCHINA POLICY ISSUES

(DSB, 22 April 1974, pp.425-431.)

Following is the text of a letter dated March 25 1974, from Secretary Kissinger to Senator Edward M.Kennedy, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Refugees of the Senate Committeee on the Judiciary.

TEXT OF LETTER

March 25, 1974

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: In response to your letter of March 13 on various aspects of United States policy toward Indochina, I am enclosing our comment on the nine specific items you have outlined. I hope this information will be useful to you. As to the recommendations of the Subcommittee's Study Mission to Indochina last year, which were enclosed with your letter, I have asked Governor Holton (Linwood Holton, Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations) to review these and to prepare our comments for submission to you as soon as possible.

Your letter also expressed concern over a March 6 cable by Ambassador (Graham) Martin commenting on a recent press article on the United States role in Vietnam. I do not believe the Ambassador is suggesting a cause-and effect relation-ship between decisions in Hanoi and the views of any individual Members of Congress or their staffs. What he is describing is a very real and sophisticated propaganda effort by North Vietnam to bring to bear on a wide spectrum of Americans its own special view of the situation in Indochina. The Ambassador believes, and in this he has our full confidence and support, that we must counter these distortions emanating from Hanoi and continue to provide the best answers to the concerned questions many Americans have about our Indochina policy.

Warm regards,

HENRY A. KISSINGER

Enclosure:

Comment on Indochina Policy Issues

THE HONOURABLE EDWARD M. KENNEDY,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Refugees,
Committee on the Judiciary,
United States Senate.

TEXT OF ENCLOSURE

1) 'The general character and objectives of American policy towards Indochina as a whole and towards each govern -ment or political authority in the area;'

There are two basic themes in our policy toward Indochina. The first is our belief that a secure peace in Indochina is an important element in our efforts to achieve a worldwide structure of peace. Conversely, we believe that an evolution toward peace in other troubled areas helps bring about the stability for which we strive in Indochina. Consequently, our Indochina policy has been geared to bring about the conditions which will enable the contending parties to find a peaceful resolution of their differences.

A resolution of differences can, of course, be achieved by other than peaceful means. For example, North Vietnam might seek to conquer South Vietnam by force of arms. Such a resolution, however, would almost certainly be a temporary one and would not produce the longterm and stable peace which is essential. Therefore, a corollary to our search for peace, and the second theme of our policy, is to discourage the takeover of the various parts of Indochina by force. For -cible conquest is not only repugnant to American traditions but also has serious destabilising effects which are not limited to the area under immediate threat.

We would stress the point that the United States has no desire to see any particular form of government or social system in the Indochina countries. What we do hope to see is a free choice by the people of Indochina as to the governments and systems under which they will live. To that end we have devoted immense human and material resources to assist them in protecting this right of choice.

Our objective with regard to the Government of Vietnam, the Government of the Khmer Republic and the Royal Lao Gover -nment is to provide them with the material assistance and political encouragement which they need in determining their own futures and in helping to create conditions which will permit free decisions. In Laos, happily, real progress has been made, partly because of our assistance. The Vientiane Agreement and Protocols give clear evidence of the possibili -ty for the peaceful settlement our policies are designed to foster. We have supported the Royal Lao Government and, when it is formed, we will look with great sympathy on the Govern -ment of National Union. We welcome a peaceful and neutral Laos and, where appropriate, we will continue to encourage the parties to work out their remaining problems.

In Cambodia we are convinced that longterm prospects for stability would be enhanced by a ceasefire and a negotiated settlement among the Khmer elements to the conflict. Because such stability is in our interests we are providing diplomatic and material support to the legitimate government

of the Khmer Republic, both in its self-defence efforts and in its search for a political solution to the war.

Our objective in Vietnam continues to be to help streng -then the conditions which made possible the Paris Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam. With this in mind we have supported the Republic of Vietnam with both military and economic assistance. We believe that by provid- ing the Vietnamese Government the necessary means to defend itself and to develop a viable economy, the government in Hanoi will conclude that political solutions are much pre- ferable to renewed use of major military force. The presence of large numbers of North Vietnamese troops in the South demonstrates that the military threat from Hanoi is still very much in evidence. Because of that threat we must still ensure that the Republic of Vietnam has the means to protect its independence. We note, however, that the level of violen -ce is markedly less than it was prior to the ceasefire and believe that our policy of support for South Vietnam has been instrumental in deterring major North Vietnamese offen- sives.

Our objective with regard to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and its southern arm, the Provisional Revolutionary Government is to encourage full compliance with the Paris Agreement. We have been disappointed by North Vietnam's ser- ious violations of important provisions of the Agreement. However, we still believe that the Agreement provides a work

-able framework for a peaceful and lasting settlement, and we will continue to use all means available to us to support the ceasefire and to encourage closer observance of it. Our future relations with Hanoi obviously depend in large part on how faithfully North Vietnam complies with the Agreement.

2) 'The general content and nature of existing obligations and commitments to the governments in Saigon, Phnom Penh and Vientiane.'

The US has no bilateral written commitment to the Government of the Republic of Vietnam. However, as a signator of the Paris Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam, the United States committed itself to strengthening the conditions which made the ceasefire possible and to the goal of the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination. With these commitments in mind, we continue to provide to the Republic of Vietnam the means necessary for its self-defence and for its economic viability.

We also recognise that we have derived a certain obliga -tion from our long and deep involvement in Vietnam. Perceiving our own interest in a stable Vietnam free to make its own political choices, we have encouraged the Vietnamese people in their struggle for independence. We have invested great human and material resources to support them in protect -ing their own as well as broader interests. We have thus committed ourselves very substantially, both politically and

morally. While the South Vietnamese Government and people are demonstrating increasing self-reliance, we believe it is important that we continue our support as long as it is needed.

Our relations with the Government of the Khmer Republic also do not stem fron a formal commitment but are based on our own national interests. Recognising that events in Cambo -dia relate directly to the bitter hostilities in other parts of Indo-china, we have sought to help create stability in that country as a part of our effort to encourage the development of peace in the entire region. We, therefore, support the legitimate government of Cambodia, in the hope that its increasing strength will encourage the Khmer Communists toward a political settlement rather than continued conflict.

We have also undertaken our assistance to Laos and supp -ort for the Royal Lao Government because of our own broad national interests, not because of any formal commitment to that country. The most important and visible of our interests is our desire for a just settlement of the tragic war in Indochina. Laos plays a key role in this effort to achieve the peace. Indeed, Laos is the bright spot in Indochina where the fruits of our efforts to assist and support the Royal Lao Government are most clearly seen. A ceasefire based on an agreement worked out by the two Lao parties has endured for more than a year. The two parties have together organised joint security forces in the two capital cities of Vientiane and Luang Prabang and a coalition government may not be far

away. We feel that these large steps toward a lasting peace in Laos would probably not have succeeded but for our steadfast support for the efforts of the Royal Lao Government.

3) 'The kinds, categories and levels of support and assistance given or projected to the governments in Saigon, Phnom Penh and Vientiane for fiscal year 1975 through 1975 - including (a) a breakdown of the number, distribution, activities and agency/departmental association of official American personnel, as well as those associated with private business and other organisations under contract to the United States government; and (b) a breakdown from all sources of humanitarian assistance, police and public safety oriented assistance, general supporting and economic development assistance, and military assistance.'

(a) US Economic Assistance

Our annual Congressional Presentation books provide the data requested here in considerable detail. These Congressional Presentation books for FY 1975 will shortly be deliver -ed to the Congress. We provide these first, as a matter of course, to the authorising and appropriations Committees of the Senate and the House and then routinely make them available to all Members as well as the interested public. We will be happy tp provide your Subcommittee on Refugees with copies as soon as possible.

The Congressional Presentation books focus, of course, on our proposals for the coming year, FY 1975, but also con -tain data of both the current fiscal year, FY 1974 and the preceding, FY 1973. This year, as last, we are preparing a separate book providing the details of our economic assistan -ce programmes for the Indochina countries.

These Congressional Presentation books form a partial basis, of course, for extensive Hearings held each year by the authorising committees in the Senate and House, and then by the appropriations committees. We would expect the quest- ion you pose, as well as many others, to be further explored in explored in considerable depth during the course of these hearings.

(b) US Military Assistance

Our military assistance to South Vietnam and Laos is provided under MASF (military assistance service funded).The breakdown of this assistance for the period you requested is as follows:

Year	Ceiling	New Obligational Authority
FY 1973	$2.735 Billion	$ 2.563 Billion
FY 1974	$1.126 Billion	$ 907.5 Million
FY 1975	$1.6 Billion	$ 1.450 Billion[a] (Requested)

The level of official US military/civilian personnel in South Vietnam during the same period is as follows:

Year	Military	Civilian
January, 1973	23,516 (Assigned)	730
January, 1974	221 (Authorised)	1200
June, 1974	221 (Authorised)	936

The number of US civilian contractors has declined from 5,737 in January 1973, to 2,736 in January 1974. This number is expected to decrease further to 2,130 by June 1974. We do not yet have a projected level of US civilian contractors for FY 1975.

Our military assistance to Cambodia is furnished under MAP (military assistance programme). This assistance totalled $148.6 million in FY 1974. The level of our military assistance for FY 1975 is now under review. The amount to be proposed will be included in the Congressional presentation documents on military assistance which we expect to submit to Congress shortly.

US military and civilian personnel in Cambodia during the period you requested is as follows:

Year	Military	Civilian
December 1972	112	53
December 1973	113	55
December 1974	113	DNA*

US military and civilian personnel in Laos during the period you requested is as follows:

Year	Military	Civilian
December 1972	185	457
December 1973	180	424
December 1974	30**	DNA*

4) 'The current status and problems of reported efforts to establish an international consortium for general reconstruction assistance to the area.'

In April 1973 President Thieu asked the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) to help form an aid group for the Republic of Vietnam. The IBRD agreed to make the effort, provided that this would be acceptable to the Bank membership and that the group could be organised in association with both the IBRD and the Asian Development Bank. In May the World Bank sent a study mission to Vietnam to review the situation. In August, Japan suggested that the Bank arrange a preliminary meeting to exchange views on aid to the countries of Indochina. The Japanese also proposed that the member countries discuss the formation of a loose Indochina consultative group for the areawide coordination, with subgroups for any of the four countries concerned which might request such a group and where conditions were satisfactory.

An initial meeting was held at the Bank's Paris office in October. The United States supported the Bank's efforts as well as the Japanese proposal. The Bank sent a second mission to Vietnam in November and subsequently proposed that a follow-on meeting be held in February of this year to discuss the formation of the Indochina consultative group. However, the reactions of the participating countries to the energy crisis and to the Congressional decision on IDA (International Development Association) replenishment led the Bank to postpone the meeting, tentatively until late Spring. In February, at the request of the Lao Government, a World Bank team also visited Laos to assess the situation and to discuss a possible consultative group for that country.

The United States continues to support efforts to form an Indochina consultative group. We also favour the proposal that there be subgroups for each recipient country to which donors may contribute as they wish. The subgroups would be formed when considered appropriate by donors and at the request of the recipient. We remain in close consultation with the World Bank and other interested parties on the matter.We are hopeful that a second meeting of participants might be held in the near future and that such a meeting might lead to the establishment of the groups in question. A reversal of the negative Congressional action on IDA replenishment would clearly enhance the possibility of success in this regard.

5) 'The current status and problems of the Administrat-ion's stated intention to encourage internationalising human -itarian assistance to the area;'

In addition to US bilateral humanitarian assistance to the Indochina countries which totals $111.4 million for FY 1974, the Department and the Agency for International Devel -opment (AID) continue to encourage other donors, including international organisations, to provide such assistance.AID made a grant of $2 million on November 1, 1973, to the Indo -china Operations Group of the International Committee of the Red Cross and discussions are continuing about an additi -onal grant to that organisation. UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) has recently completed its study of the pro -blems in the Indochina countries and has just submitted its proposed programme to possible donor countries. We have encouraged UNICEF in its study and are pleased that it is now prepared to expand its activities in all three countries.

The World Health Organisation has had meaningful program -mes in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam which supplement and do not overlap with activities supported by the United States. We have encouraged that organisation to play an even more important role, particularly in the malaria control programme, and we at the same time would phase out of our activities in that field.

Our discussions with Indochina countries have stressed

the desirability of establishing plans and priorities for programmes and projects which require assistance so that other donor countries and organisations can fit their assistance efforts into the host country requirements.

6) 'The current status of negotiations between Washington and Hanoi on American reconstruction assistance to North Vietnam.'

Following the conclusion of the Peace Agreement last year, preliminary discussions of postwar reconstruction were held in Paris between US and North Vietnamese members of the Joint Economic Commission. These talks have been sus -pended since last July. The Administration's position, whi -ch we believe is shared by the great majority of members of Congress, is that the US cannot at this time move forward with an assistance programme for North Vietnam. To date, North Vietnam has failed substantially to live up to a number of the essential terms of the Agreement, including those relating to the introduction of troops and war material into South Vietnam, the cessation of military activities in Cambodia and Laos, and the accounting for our missing-in-action Should Hanoi turn away from a military solution and demonstrate a serious compliance with the Agreement, then we would be prepared, with the approval of Congress, to proceed with our undertaking regarding reconstruction assistance to North Vietnam.

7) 'The Department's assessment on the implementation of the ceasefire agreements for both Vietnam and Laos.'

The ceasefire in Vietnam has resulted in a substantial decrease in the level of hostilities; for example, military casualties since the ceasefire have been about one-third the level of casualties suffered in the years preceding the Paris Agreement. Nonetheless, it is unfortunately evident that significant violence continues to occur and that the ceasefire is far from scrupulously observed. The fundamental problem is that the North Vietnamese are atill determined to seize political power in the South, using military means if necessary. To this end they have maintained unrelenting military pressure against the South Vietnamese Government and have continued widespread terrorism against the population. In particularly flagrant violation of the Agreement North Vietnam has persisted in its infiltration of men and materiel into the South, bringing in more than one hundred thousand troops and large quantities of heavy equipment since the ceasefire began. South Vietnamese forces have reacted against these attacks by North Vietnamese forces and several sizeable engagements have taken place.

Despite these serious violations, we continue to believe that the Paris Agreement has already brought substantial benefits and continues to provide a workable framework for peace. After more than a quarter century of fighting it wou-

ld have been unrealistic to expect that the Agreement would bring an instant and complete end to the conflict. What it has done, however, is to reduce the level of violence significantly and provide mechanisms for discussion. The two Viet -namese parties are talking to each other and are achieving some results, even if these results are much less than we would like to see. The final exchange of prisoners which was completed on March 7 is illustrative.

We assess the ceasefire agreement in Laos as being so far largely successful. The level of combat was reduced substantially immediately following the ceasefire and has since fallen to a handful of incidents per week. There is hope that if developments continue as they have, the Laos ceasefire will work and the Lao, through their own efforts, will be able to establish a coalition government and a stable peace in their country.

8) 'The Department's assessment of the overall situation in Cambodia and the possibility for a ceasefire agreement.

Despite continued pressure by the Khmer insurgents, now generally under the control of the Khmer Communist Party,the Khmer armed forces have successfully repulsed two major insurgent operations, one against Kompong Cham and, more recen -tly, against Phnom Penh, with no US combat support. Serious military problems remain, and continued hard fighting during the next few months is expected, both in the provinces and around the capital.

A broadened political base, a new Prime Minister and a more effective cabinet offer signs of improvement in the civ -il administration. The enormous dislocation of war, destroy -ing production, producing over a million refugees and encou -raging spiralling inflation, face the leaders of the Khmer Republic with serious problems.

Nonetheless, we are convinced that with US material and diplomatic support the Khmer Republic's demonstration of mil -itary and economic viability will persuade their now intran -sigent opponents to move to a political solution of the Cam -bodian conflict. The Khmer Republic's Foreign Minister on March 21 reiterated his government's position that a soluti- on for Cambodia should be peaceful and not forced by arms or capitulation. Instead, his government will continue to seek talks with the other side.His government hopes their efforts for peace will achieve some results after the current insur- gent offensive.

9) 'Recent diplomatic initiatives, involving the United States, aimed at a reduction of violence in Indochina and a greater measure of normalisation in the area.'

Since the signing of the Vietnam ceasefire agreement, the United States has been in constant liaison with the in- terested parties, including those outside of the Indochina area. While it would not be useful to provide details of all these contacts, we can assure the Congress that we have used

every means at our disposal to encourage a reduction in the level of violence and an orderly resolution of the conflict. We believe these measures have had some success. The level of fighting is down substantially from 1972 and the Vietnamese parties have taken at least beginning steps toward a sat -isfactory accomodation. Further, the interested outside par -ties remain basically committed to building on the framework of the ceasefire agreement.

When Hanoi established a pattern of serious violations of the Agreement shortly after its conclusion, Dr. Kissinger met with Special Adviser Le Duc Tho and negotiated the Paris communique of June 13, 1973, with a view to stabilising the situation. Secretary Kissinger returned to Paris in December 1973, to again discuss with Special Adviser Tho the status of the implementation of the Agreement. We will continue to maintain such contacts with Vietnamese and other parties in the hope that Hanoi will eventually be persuaded that its in -terests lie in peaceful development rather than in conflict

In Laos, we have offered every encouragement to an evolution toward peace. At this time the Laotian parties are making great progress in the formation of a government of national union. We can help in this regard with our sympathy and encouragement while properly leaving the issue in the hands of those most interested, the Lao people.

The Government of the Khmer Republic, with our complete endorsement, has made notable efforts to terminate the hosti

-lities in that country. Following the ceasefire in Vietnam, the Cambodian Government unilaterally ceased hostile activity by its forces in the hope that the other side would respond. Unfortunately that striking gesture was rebuffed. On frequent occasions thereafter the Khmer Republic made proposals designed to move the conflict from the battlefield to political fora, with our strong support in each instance. Although all of those proposals have been ignored by the Khmer communists, we continue to hope that the current relative military balance will make apparent to the other sidewhat the Khmer Republic has already perceived, that peace is a far more hopeful prospect for Cambodia than incessant conflict.

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a Vietnam only; Laos will be included under MAP for FY-75.

* Data Not Available.

** Based on the assumption that a coalition government will be formed in Laos before the end of this year.

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